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Mediascene

ISSUE 36

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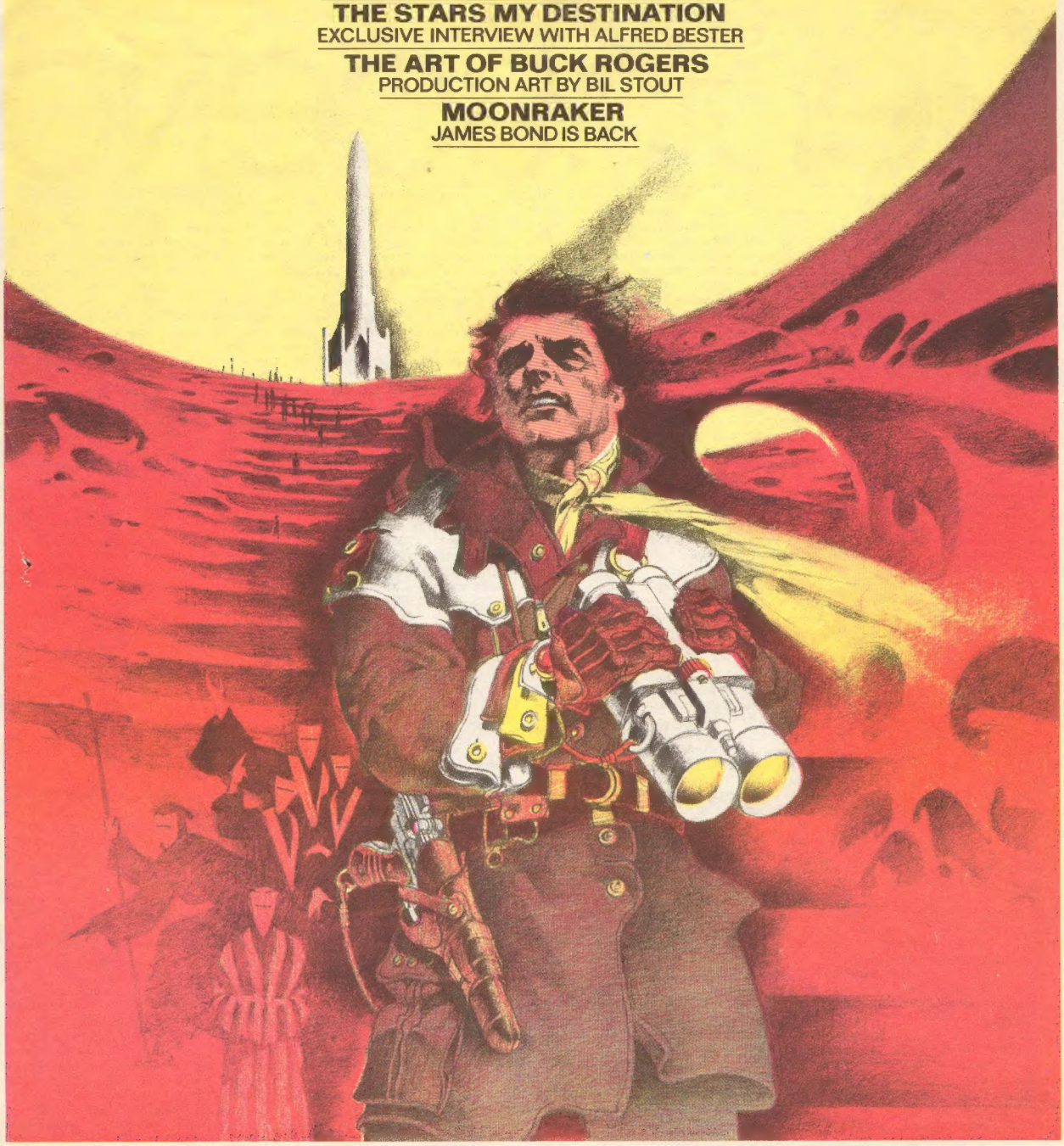
THIS ISSUE

RAY BRADBURY'S
MARTIAN CHRONICLES
A SCIENCE FICTION TELEVISION MINI-SERIES

THE STARS MY DESTINATION
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH ALFRED BESTER

THE ART OF BUCK ROGERS
PRODUCTION ART BY BIL STOUT

MOONRAKER
JAMES BOND IS BACK



A SUPERGRAPHICS PUBLICATION

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Issue 36
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MEDIASCENE

Every individual who buys this magazine is looking for something—something new, something different, something unique, something special. I provide all those in varying degrees in each issue of **MEDIASCENE**, and, in addition to entertaining my audience, I have a very sincere interest in enlightening, informing and educating them.

That may sound presumptous, but what this publication lacks in delicacy, is made up for by enterprise and integrity. Yet, too often, I become engrossed in showing you *what* to see—instead of *how* to see.

The first is what you pay for when you buy **MEDIASCENE**—exciting illustrations, informative photos, imaginative graphics. The second is something I can give you as a bonus.

But, you'll have to work at it.

You may have to read some interesting books, look at some great pictures, listen to some fine music and watch a good many films. In fact, films are an excellent place to start, because they're one of the aspects that we all have in common.

Too often we're inclined to consider just the external factors when we experience not only art and the many forms it takes, but our very surroundings and relationships—indeed, our very selves. By not being able to penetrate the obvious, we frequently cut ourselves off from the true essence of these things. It is only logical that lack of understanding will lead to a lack of pleasure and enjoyment.

This kind of failure begins with the rejection of ideas that may seem foreign to a particular focus of interest. I referred to it in my last editorial as *limited perception*, while pointing out a number of close correlations between today's fantasy artists and those of the past.

This time, I'd like to discuss film—and in particular how certain aspects of the cinema relate directly to comic art and graphic narrative. In the purest sense, movies and comics are identical: one embodies a series of photographic images in sequence on film; the other generally relies on drawn images which are also structured adjacently. The essential difference between the two is that the first excludes the viewer as a participant by producing the action mechanically through the use of a motion picture projector, while the second engages the aid of the reader by *forcing him* to fill in the action from panel to panel, thereby becoming a participant in the story itself.

One of the most interesting similiarities between the two forms exists in the nature of what is called production design. The function of production design is to determine on paper the precise size, position and movement of all elements which will appear on the screen *before* filming actually takes place.

The production designer works very closely with the director to envision the action and atmosphere that will hopefully be attained in the finished film. This is the stage where shots and camera angles can be developed for maximum dramatic impact, eliminating unsatisfactory material simply by creating new drawings—a process much less expensive than discarding film footage during the editing stage.

These illustrations can involve complete storyboards which show every shot in the film to renderings of specific scenes that appear throughout the story. Generally, the more production design done on a film, the more visual the finished product becomes, ultimately making it more viewable. A film storyboard and a comic narrative use essentially the same rules to present drama; there are differences, but the basic syntax achieves an *identical* purpose in both cases.

This is where the fun begins.

Just as it is possible to determine an artist by observing the technique in which he renders, so too is it possible to detect the style of a director, production designer or a cinematographer by looking *beyond* the action to the very structure of the film itself.

Alfred Hitchcock is an good example because his best films are so graphic and personally stylized, it is impossible not to recognize them. All that style, of course, has been carefully worked out *beforehand* by a production designer. The backward-moving camera, the jump-cutting of extreme close-ups, the startling subjective shots, are all as unmistakable as Kubert's birds-eye-views or Kane's nostril shots.

Hitchcock's storyboards are so complete that it is said he can read a magazine while shooting a scene—no guesswork, he knows precisely what he wants to film. The manner in which Hitchcock orchestrates his pictures is one of the most stimulating aspects about his work. The same is true about Toth and Kirby; their storytelling is as extraordinary as their facility for drawing.

Playing the credits game can also be an interesting diversion—the credits that run behind the title of motion pictures. Careful observation will pay off by revealing which films have particularly adept production designers, art directors and set decorators—all aspects which will contribute to a good two-hour's entertainment.

Even the casual observer of TV's film fare soon realizes that MGM brought a lush, bright, bourgeois quality to their product, the opposite of Universal's romantic gothic approach, or RKO's capacity for dark, yet potent realism. Paramount Pictures leaned toward the clean, deco look, while Warners built a Teutonic intensity into their films. The Fox style was pleasantly rococo.

Besides all this, the individuals themselves left their own indisputable imprints on their work. One of my favorites is William Cameron Menzies, whose achievement for set design copped the Oscar during the first Academy Awards in 1928. *Any* Menzies film has some kind of visual merit to it, and some can stand up through several dozen viewings without diminishing their impact. **For Whom The Bell Tolls, Foreign Correspondent, Gone With The Wind** and the 1936 version of **Shape of Things to Come.**

There's much to enjoy in these films, and even more to be learned, especially by illustrators and graphic designers, not to mention those whose avocations include visual narratives on paper or film. It should be mandatory for any individuals who have interest in the form to view Sergi Eisenstein's **Battleship Potemkin, Alexander Nevsky** and **Ivan The Terrible**—three films with the strongest visual content in the history of the cinema. If only comics could be half as good.

I believe you should know your business, even if it's your pleasure. Bet you didn't know that Ub Iwerks did for **The Birds** what he did for Mickey Mouse in **Steamboat Willie**. Or that John Ford, who made **Stagecoach, Grapes of Wrath** and **My Darling Clementine**, was inspired by the paintings of Frederick Remington.

It's all there for you to discover, but like I said before, you have to work at it.

Let me give you an example. As a rapt student of the American film, I have, over the years, spent more than a little time in front of a silver screen and a cathode tube. I can still recall the *first* movie I ever saw in a theatre, **The Mask of Dimitrios**—one which I believe had a profound impact on my later development as an artist and storyteller. I was six. The Disney films are also clearly imprinted in my memory along with hundreds of "B" westerns, gangster flicks, musicals, action serials and swashbucklers. I sometimes wonder if there was a science fiction or horror film made during the 50s that I didn't see at one time or another. During that period of my life, I often went to three films a day.

Though my theatrical attendance has diminished considerably since that time, my interest has not—as the friendly, unblinking eye that watches over my studio and allows me to semi-view sometimes as many as six features a day will attest. At any given time, I harbor a list of the ten films I want *most* to see. Some of these simply never turn up on TV, such as **Witchcraft Through the Ages** (I had to make a two-and-a-half hour drive to New York to see that one, and it was worth every minute of it!). It took me twice as long to travel to a screening of Fritz Lang's two **Siegfried** films—that was during one of the East Coast's worst snow storms. One's habits can be expensive. I once stayed an extra two days in Hollywood to see William Wellman's **Wild Boys of the Road**, a film that had been on my list for years. The tab for those days, along with the car rental and the airline reservations that had to be unbooked and rebooked made the film about the most expensive I've ever attended. I'm glad I did it. The film was great.

There are those I'm sure who would regard this behavior as a form of insanity. I view it as part of my education—you see, I never went to any kind of graduate school or college, not even art school. There are times, of course, when I wish I had. Still, I always opted for on-the-job training, and became a seat-of-the-pants survival expert. Being completely self-taught, I know the value of observation, and that's why I insist so strongly that no fan or follower of any art form or sub-culture can be really knowledgeable until he has a wide perspective of the field—until he develops *unlimited* perception.

It can lead to some interesting possibilities—like the one on which I'm working at the moment, production design paintings for an upcoming George Lucas/Steven Spielberg film. No, I can't tell you about it just yet, but it does encompass my knowledge of art, design, the nature of film and one other thing, perception.

Til next time, stay well.●

STERANKO

NOBODY DOES IT BETTER

As a long time reader of fantastic film material, I must confess that I just don't know how you do it. Several issues ago you covered **Time After Time, Shape of Things to Come** and a number of other films that obviously bigger budget magazines such as **Starlog** and **Future** are only now getting around to.

Although your way of doing things can often take some getting used to, I must confess that you've got me hooked. I want to know about film projects as they develop, not a few weeks before they're in general release. As someone who's marginally involved in the business, I find it necessary to keep up with the latest news, and I find that **MEDIASCENE** not only does it first, but frequently does it better than any other publication—including those who specialize in it.

As I said before, I don't know how you do it. I just want to be sure you keep on doing it.

R. Burnett Fleming
Los Angeles CA

Be assured, we intend to keep doing it. How we do it is our business, but it takes a hell of a lot of blood, sweat and tears—or more precisely time, effort and energy. Just between us, we have it from an inside source that those "specialty" magazines read ours just to see what's happening.

There's even more relief in sight as we generate plans for future issues with a minimum of science fiction content. Films? Yes. Graphics? Of course. Plus an upcoming special that will knock the socks off every comic fan within miles.

SERIOUS ABOUT SERIES

I am a young artist, and have always wanted to pick your brain to find out your ideas on composition, anatomy, negative space, storytelling and anything else you might have to say about the subject of comics.

After a day job, I work on my drawing in the evening, and I feel that **MEDIASCENE**'s previous installments on "Breaking Into Comics" have saved me at least a year's worth of trial and error. I had just begun to make a synthesis of anatomical structure when—ZAP!—you had already analyzed it and put it in print so that all the rest of us hopefuls could take advantage of your knowledge and experience.

You have obviously given a tremendous amount of thought and study to the many aspects of comic art and their application to storytelling. The series in your magazine and **Graphic Narrative** have become extremely important in shaping my own approach to drawing.

So, I'd like to make a YES vote to keeping the series going. There are few professionals who really have the knowledge, ability or desire to share their expertise with fandom. We need all the help we can get.

Joe Reid
New York NY

We've never really been convinced that **MEDIASCENE** *is the place for any kind of "how to" material, but since so many of our readers have an acute interest in the four-color medium, we thought we'd take a chance with the series. To date, there have been few negative responses. It appears that even those who have no actual aspirations of entering the comics field are interested enough in knowing "how it's done" to support the feature. But the one point that makes us want to continue "Breaking Into Comics" is that we've never seen the subject written about and presented clearly enough to suit our taste. That alone may be reason enough to publish future installments.*

NO NEWS IS BAD NEWS

You may correctly assume that I find your magazine to be worth my while—and my money. However, I personally felt that issue 33, the All-Art Issue, was the worst you have ever done. Not that the reproduction or selection of material were less than first-rate, but rather it was that I could not approve of devoting an entire double issue to artwork. That is not what I want to get from **MEDIASCENE**, and I was angry.

Obviously it is your right to publish what you want to, what you find notable. I only say that I did not agree with your decision, and that I hope it does not happen again.

It is in that hope that I renew my subscription—not to an art magazine but to one that covers fantastic comic books and films. To a magazine that did such a remarkable job of previewing **Star Wars, Close Encounters** and now, from all appearances, **Alien.** That's the stuff I enjoy.

Bill Mills
Eau Claire WI

Well, you can't please everybody. Frankly, Bill, you're correct; **MEDIASCENE** *isn't an art magazine. As we said before, it was produced as a Christmas special, tightly sandwiched between two other issues, so that no news or previews were lost. Hopefully, we'll make it up to you with this issue's feature on Martian Chronicles, in addition to everything that's coming up in the year ahead.*

TO NOTE THE SOURCES

Your last editorial makes a point about expanding perception beyond contemporary illustrators to the people who influenced them. The unfortunate omission in all the cases you mentioned was that the influences were really just other artists who, in their day, were the Frazettas and Barry Smiths of their time. The real problem with most contemporary comic/fantasy illustrators is that they are too rooted in the Wyeth/Rockwell mode and not enough in the other forms of graphics.

In a discussion I recently had with a graphic designer/illustrator about art, film and TV, he made the observation that the basic difference between us was that my influences are rooted

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in what he calls "pulp fiction," something he finds repulsive. He sees himself as a modernist/absurdist, more influenced by things like **Monty Python** and off-Broadway theatre.

My point is simply that I've tried to assimilate both the "pulp" and the "absurdist" elements into my own work, and still develop a style that functions as a whole. There is something fresh and exciting about combining Frank Frazetta and Milton Glaser in a kind of overlap of technique, style and concept that simply is *not* being done today—but which I very much want to be a hallmark of my own work.

I found **The Illustrated Harlan Ellison** to be too rooted in typical comics illustration style for my taste. Perhaps the Steranko story could be classified as a different approach because of the unilateral nature of the pieces, but the feeling I got from them is that they really don't make much of a graphic statement apart from the text and the 3-D treatment.

When (if ever) is DC going to have Joe Kubert draw an entire Batman story? Are they going to wait until the guy is too old to hold a pencil? They already let both Kirby and Ditko go without giving them a Batman assignment (not counting the first issue of Man-bat). The thought of a Kubert Joker tale is enough to send chills down my spine.

Dan Recchia
Mamaroneck NY

The DC editors read **MEDIASCENE**, *and perhaps your request [especially if it was followed by a couple hundred letters] might just do the trick. The point of last issue's editorial was written to open the door to other art forms besides just comics or fantasy art or even films. The specifics were only suggestions that would hopefully precipitate a more determined quest. The editorial in this issue carries the matter a step further.*

The idea of a Frazetta/Glaser amalgam is, indeed, an exciting one, but a careful look at almost any newsstand will prove that it is being done by today's commercial artists. Several that immediately come to mind are Bob Pepper, Wilson McLean, Don Punchatz, Larry Kresek and Jan Sawka. Each of them has worked in the fantasy and science fiction market, each has a distinctive blend of realism and abstraction, and each has a powerful conceptual approach—yet all of them are remarkable different.

Don't be too disturbed by your friend's ultra-snobbish attitude about your case of "pulp fiction." It happens to the best of us.

AN ADKINS ADMIRER

I just wanted to drop you line thanking you for **MEDIASCENE** 33, a terrific issue, one of the best you've put out since I've been a subscriber. And that's saying quite a bit, since just about each one is uniformly excellent. I'm not usually a fan of Dan Adkins, but I was very impressed by the piece in 33, the best Adkins I've ever seen. While I don't always agree with some of the content, the presentation format makes the reading well worthwhile.

Phil Raymondo
Lake Park FL

Adkins says thanks for your kind words. We think that his best work appeared in the previous issue's Hulk centerspread. At the risk of getting in another plug, we wonder if you've seen the 10-piece Conan portfolio Adkins did for the new **Cartoonists & Illustrators Portfolio.** *They're all in the pencil painting technique like the sample from the Poster Issue and they're all for sale or for reprinting in fan magazines.*

EDITORIAL OMISSION

I feel that **MEDIASCENE** is the best designed publication on the stands today. Imaginative layouts, spectacular typography, and some of the best artwork I've ever seen. Especially liked issue 33, the All-Poster Special. Only one complaint, though. I wish you would have made some note as to where the pieces were originally from. Especially the cover to the second section—very nice!

Brad Foster
Austin TX

You won't get an argument from us, Brad. You're obviously a man of superb taste. We've always felt that **MEDIASCENE** *has a special individually all its own, and if there are any who don't believe it, we defy them to produce another magazine that even comes close. A year or two ago an acquaintance of ours started a similiar publication. He was New York based, boasted of a much higher production budget, and admitted that he ripped-off our style and format. It folded after a single issue. Get the point?*

Sorry to disappoint you about not listing the sources of the art in issue 33, but this may help somewhat: the art by Adkins, Alcala, Nebres and Thorne was created especially for the magazine; the Boas and Russell work was previously unpublished; and the Windsor-Smith, Kaluta, Wrightson and Jones pieces were from obscure prints, portfolios and covers. The Steranko jungle girl second cover was originally drawn for one of the illustrations that appears in color on the Supergraphics Comic Collector Boxes.

READY FOR A CHANGE

I guess I've been buying **MEDIASCENE** as long as most other readers, and I think I'm reaching a saturation level. No, not necessarily with the magazine itself, but with the material. How many issues has it been with almost all film previews—and almost all fantasy and science fiction films at that. Don't you think you're overdoing it a bit!

I liked **Star Wars** as well as the next guy and I'll probably like **Alien** just as much (even if it's only half as good as your article). But I'm ready for something different—maybe not quite as different as an all-western issue or a definitive interview with Cheryl Ladd, but still different enough to tickle my roots while whetting my appetite for the real thing.

Promise you'll get us both out of a rut.

Bob Walling
Richmond VA

You must be reading our minds—or catching on to our style. We have realized that we've served a steady diet of SF and fantasy film material for the past year or two, moderately tempered with an ample helping of good graphics and comics features. It's topical material, and **MEDIASCENE** *is a topical magazine. But too much of a good thing can be boring. At times, the decision is made for us. For example, we knew in the summer of 1978 that our first issue for the new year would carry an exclusive on* **Alien.** *The film is simply too important to handle any other way, and nothing would have convinced us to do it any other way.*

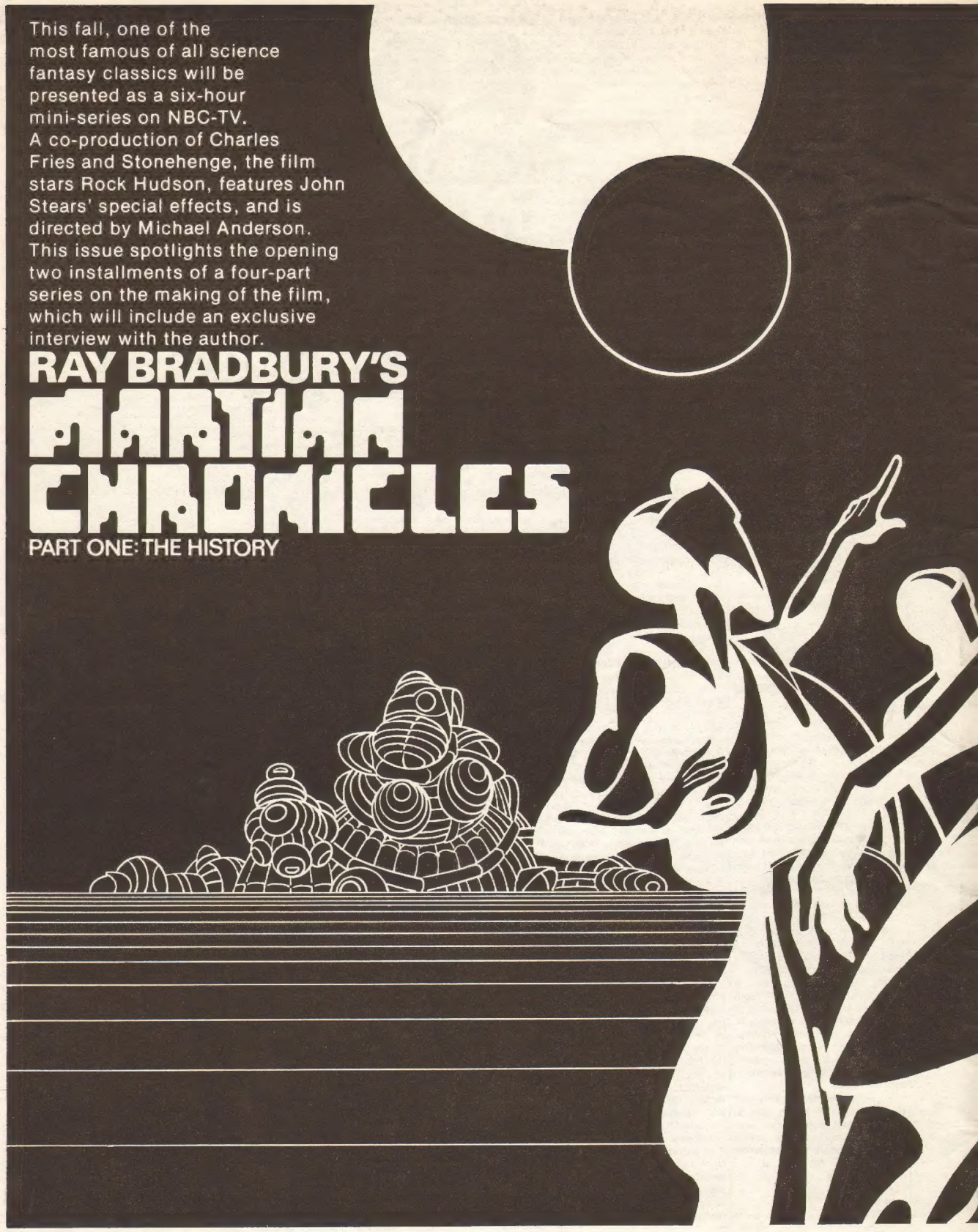
The next **MEDIASCENE,** *however, will do a complete about-face. Almost five years ago, we published a special Pin-up Girls Issue, which has been a steady back-issue seller. So, we've decided to do it again with a host of delightful graphic features that focus on females. We'll explore the Caroline Munro cult, look over the shoulders of the great girl artists, face a legion of terrors with the Pulp Heroines, and reveal the kinkier aspects of* **The Rocky Horror Picture Show.**

Our attention has been drawn to the fact that there was misleading information in the feature **Shape of Things to Come** in our Nov-Dec 1978 issue. The producer, Harry Alan Towers, has asked us to make it clear to our readers that there is no connection between this film and Gerry Anderson, and that, through no fault of our own, illustrations 10,11,12 on page 20 were printed without the consent of the copyright holders. We and the producer of the film apologize to all concerned.

This fall, one of the most famous of all science fantasy classics will be presented as a six-hour mini-series on NBC-TV. A co-production of Charles Fries and Stonehenge, the film stars Rock Hudson, features John Stears' special effects, and is directed by Michael Anderson. This issue spotlights the opening two installments of a four-part series on the making of the film, which will include an exclusive interview with the author.

RAY BRADBURY'S MARTIAN CHRONICLES

PART ONE: THE HISTORY



Mars.

The turbulent red planet, named after a mythic Roman god of war; fourth from the sun; entwined with shifting canals; endowed with life by fantasists and scientists alike; a distant, mysterious world.

But who could tell us the story of Mars *before* we got there? Who could see *beyond* the sterile facts radioed to Earth from deep-space probes, or look centuries ahead to document the dreams of men born and raised on their newly-adopted world? Who could foresee the poetry and mythology of the planet's original inhabitants?

It would take a dreamer, versed in science-fact as well as science-fiction, to create the legends of a world uncharted—a writer with fantastic vision, with a sense of history, and a moral optimism that encompasses a myriad of human frailties.

That writer developed during the Atomic Age of the 1940s. His name was Ray Bradbury, and his volume of visions was **The Martian Chronicles**.

Between 1946 and 1950, Bradbury created a disjointed series of short stories that were loosely inter-related by a recurring vision of the 21st century exploration and conquest of Earth's neighbor in the heavens, Mars. His crimson, arid *mise en scene* was often as unbelievable and romanticised as the one found in Edgar Rice Burroughs' John Carter novels, but rather than sounding the trumpets of rugged blood and thunder battle, Bradbury chose to let his tales echo softly on a poet's lyre, creating chords of morality, whimsy, satire and sombre moral reflection.

Because the stories were originally written for publications that ranged from the fast action pulps to the mainstream slick magazines, The Martian Chronicles became a curious amalgam of robots and psychodrama, death-rays and melancholy for a dying world, mental telepathy and social responsibility.

Eventually, enough tales were produced, consistant within their own loose framework, to be strung together chronologically as a novel-length portrait of a Martian era. For their collective publication, Bradbury wrote a number of bridging chapters to amplify certain themes, and tie them into a neater bundle. The result is characterized by Bradbury as "a strange mosaic," and has remained constantly in print since May 1950.

AT LAST! THE FANTASTIC FULL-COLOR VOLUME BY JONES, WRIGHTSON, WINDSOR-SMITH & KALUTA

HUNDREDS OF SUPERB REPRODUCTIONS IN 160 TOP-QUALITY PAGES BY FOUR OF AMERICA'S MOST IMAGINATIVE ARTISTS

After almost two years in production, the first full-scale, world-wide publication honoring the work of four of America's most popular and exciting fantasists is here!

Thousands of words have been written about Jeff Jones, Michael Kaluta, Barry Windsor-Smith and Berni Wrightson; countless books, magazines and fan publications have featured their drawings and paintings, but no volume has ever attempted such *a complete and authoritative study* of their careers and their work.

The book is simply called **The Studio**, which refers not only to their mid-Manhattan loft, but to their evolved styles and the sphere of influence and inspiration their work has had on a legion of followers and fan artists.

The Studio itself was established through the friendships that developed in the 1960s when the four artists recognized the value of sharing not only working space, but their mutual opinions, advice, knowledge and enthusiasm. In reality, their talents, their work and their personalities are as divergent as the points of a compass. Yet, under the expansive umbrella of heroic fantasy, science fiction and high adventure, their collective work grew in quality and quantity in the eyes of waiting audiences everywhere—until their output became almost synonymous with each other.

The Studio makes all those comparisons instantly clear, and, more importantly, reveals the four artists as *completely separate entities*, each with his own individual theories, techniques, approaches and aspirations. Those comparisons are readily apparent in the comprehensive text that runs throughout the book, carefully describing and annotating every aspect of the artist's work—*and in the hundreds of illustrations that are the real wealth of the volume.*

The sheer quality of the book's reproductions (one of the reasons for the delay in publication) is painstakingly precise, and was carefully supervised by the artists themselves. In addition, **The Studio** has been printed by *one of Europe's finest lithographers* to further insure perfection in reproduction.

The Studio is a massive 12" square, with *160 full-color pages on high-quality stock*. In format, the book is divided into four equal sections, with 40 pages devoted to each artist.

Besides collecting their work from a multitude of sources including book covers, limited edition prints and portfolios, obscure comics and fanzines, and out-of-print posters, **The Studio** features a host a rare and never—before—published illustrations and paintings specially selected by the artists for this volume.

Compared with other books which offer a selection of 40 plates, **The Studio** is an outrageous bargain, especially in consideration of its large, oversize format and the number of reproductions. A milestone of value, beauty and quality. $12.95. Available in May

IT WAS NOT MEANT AS A PREDICTION OF THINGS TO COME. I WAS OUT TO PREVENT FUTURES, NOT MAKE THEM.

Twenty-two years and two full space-age generations later, Bradbury recalled his thoughts on **The Chronicles** for the **Los Angeles Times West Magazine**- "It was not meant to be a prediction of Things to Come. I was out to prevent futures, not make them. I had contrived a Cautionary Tale which said: 'Don't do this, do that. Behave better. Walk taller. Know love. Live forever.' "

The Chronicles extended these promises of hope and warning for all who cared to read them, and even extended their sphere of influence through radio dramatizations on shows such as **X Minus One** and **Dimension X.** Recently, several tales were recorded as readings for a record album by Leonard Nimoy.

Visually, The Martian Chronicles, like thousands of other pulp tales, were originally accompanied by incidental black and white spot illustrations. Unlike most pulp tales, however, they were also officially adapted into comic book stories, following EC Comics' surreptitious "borrowing" of an entire story without notifying the author. Luckily, Bradbury has long been a collector of comic strips, and viewed the situation as an opportunity to expand his readership. He graciously overlooked the incident, and offered EC publisher Bill Gaines the opportunity to adapt a large number of his stories for a nominal fee and cover credit. In return, EC assigned their most sensitive artists and writers to preserve the poetic quality of tales like *Mars is Heaven* and *There Will Come Soft Rains* (Wally Wood), *The Million Year Picnic* (Bill Elder), *The Silent Towns* and *The Long Years* (Joe Orlando).

In the 60s, Bradbury and his long-time illustrator, Joe Mungaini, tried to launch their own comic strip version of **The Chronicles,** with the aid of Doug Wildey and John Cassone. The syndicates were simply not interested in science-fiction.

The **Chronicles** have appeared on stage many times, in several different adaptations. By 1964, Bradbury himself had written a musical version, which perhaps was shelved as being too experimental. In 1967, world-famous actor Jean-Louis Barrault's group planned to stage Louis Pauwels' French adaptation at the Odeon in Paris. It finally was produced—in 1974, and resulted in a record album as well.

Prior to that, in 1970, the University of Southern California presented their own theatrical version, an effective, imaginative production featuring a huge, tilting disc instead of an ordinary stage, without any other sets and few props. The costumes were elaborate and attractive, and, as in all productions of the **Chronicles,** the Martians wore elaborate masks. The sound effects were particularly well done, effectively realizing the alien mood.

With all these theatrical productions, it is not surprising that Bradbury himself finally presented his own version, which played in Los Angeles in 1977 and 1978. It began at the small Colony Theatre, where the cast literally outnumbered the audience. The staging was handsome and professional, with slide-projected backdrops designed by Michael Minor (several of which are reproduced here).

Though the play was engrossing and rapidly-paced, Bradbury may have erred by including too many stories and vignettes. It seemed crowed with incidents, and the audience wasn't allowed to dwell on the proceedings quite long enough. As with his film script and Richard Matheson's TV adaptation, a continuing lead character was introduced: Colonel Wilder.

With the intensity of world-wide interest in Bradbury's masterpiece, it may seem surprising there were no film versions. Perhaps one reason was the relative failure, comercially, of **Fahrenheit 451,** and the commercial *and* artistic failure of **The Illustrated Man.** Another Bradbury story, filmed as **The Picasso Summer,** was never released.

ABC's TV-movie, **The Screaming Woman,** was loosely based on a Bradbury story, but is hardly worth mentioning. The author himself wrote the original script for **It Came From Outer Space,** which Harry Essex slightly revised for filming (Essex got sole screen credit as scenarist), **The Beast From 20,000 Fathoms,** and adapted **Moby Dick** for director John Huston. Except for a few TV shows over the years, there is little more of Bradbury's work on film.

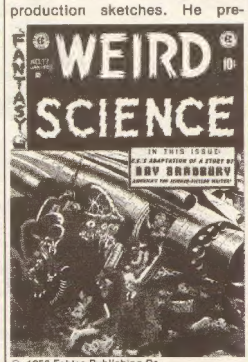
Since their creation, however, numerous attempts *have* been made to film **The Martian Chronicles**—enough that Bradbury, without a trace of bitterness, claims to have put all four of his daughters through school on film options alone.

In 1960, MGM announced that producer Julian Blaustein would film **The Martian Chronicles,** apparently from a Bradbury script. By 1962, John Houseman was MGM's intended producer, but this project was also shelved.

By 1964, the most extensive plans for realization of the stories were announced by producer Alan Pakula and director Robert Mulligan. This was to have been at least a $10 million production for Universal, to be shot in Cinerama. Gregory Peck was signed for the leading role, and production was scheduled to begin in late 1965. However, by early 1965, the Cinerama element was dropped, and, by that summer, filming plans were cancelled altogether. One aspect that developed as a result was Bradbury's own elaborate outline for **The Martian Chronicles** (synopsized elsewhere in this issue.).

Michael Minor's involvement in the material began with this proposed production. Fresh out of college and having recently met Bradbury, he heard that Pakula-Mulligan Productions were hoping to film **The Martian Chronicles.**

With Bradbury's approval, but no official sanction, Minor created a number of extra-ordinary production paintings —and over *one thousand* production sketches. He presented them to Pakula and Mulligan, but before they could give him an answer, the project was cancelled. Some of Minor's paintings and sketches are reproduced here for the first time. He later worked on **Star Trek** as well as many other TV shows and films.



© 1952 Fables Publishing Co.

With the collapse of the Pakula-Mulligan project, **The Martian Chronicles** took a back seat to the filming of **Fahrenheit 451.** Bradbury had long since decided that he wouldn't sell any of his stories to films without knowing the reputation of the director. Francois Truffaut, the great French director, former film critic (and long-time Bradbury fan) decided to film **Fahrenheit 451** as his first (and to date, only) English-language film. The resulting picture, while not top-quality Truffaut, is still the best attempt so far to translate Bradbury into cinematic terms.

In 1975, David Wolper announced plans to film a TV movie based on the stories but it wasn't until early 1978 that final plans were announced. The script was written by Richard Matheson, and the film went into production last fall. It will be shown in three two-hour segments this coming TV season.

It's interesting that Matheson was chosen for this task, and highly appropriate. Bradbury's literary success and ability sparked what some have called the Southern California "school of fantasy writers." Among these "disciples" are George Clayton Johnson, William F. Nolan (the co-writers of **Logan's Run**), Frank Robinson, Charles Beaumont and Richard Matheson.

Matheson's style, however, is normally quite different from Bradbury's. As the brilliant SF critic, damon knight, said in his book, **In Search of Wonder,** "Bradbury's strength lies in the fact that he writes about the things we are really interested in...the fundamental prerational fears and longings and desires: the rage at being born; the will to be loved; the longing to communicate; the hatred of parents and siblings; the fear of things that are not self." Most of these ideas are found in one form or another in **The Martian Chronicles,** especially the desires to love and to communicate, and the fear of others.

Although Matheson does tend to write about these same things in his own fantasy fiction, sometimes quite explicitly, his style is tinged with overtones of hard-edged detective fiction. In a way, Bradbury's greatest influences were Thomas Wolfe and Ernest Hemingway, while Matheson's were Bradbury himself and (perhaps) Raymond Chandler. Matheson is rationalistic about romantic ideals, where Bradbury is emotional about them.

This may make Matheson the ideal scenarist for Bradbury. He knows well the distinctive Bradbury prose style, full of vivid metaphors and images, yet can offset the tendency to a dreamy lack of clarity with sharper, precisely focused ideas about the reality of things. Of course, Matheson is also a very seasoned screen writer, more so than Bradbury, with an expediency about writing this kind of material. Among his credits, in addition to many **Twilight Zones,** are several of the Roger Corman/Vincent Price Poe films, **The Master of the World, Burn Witch Burn, The Devil's Bride, The Night Stalker, Duel, Legend of Hell House** and many others, including **The Incredible Shrinking Man,** from his own novel.

Matheson has added an overlay of reality to Bradbury's stories. This may eventually prove to work against the end result—Bradbury's Mars was never intended to be realistic—but it may also heighten such visual story elements as the nuclear war on Earth that forms the climax of the second part of the mini-series. Certainly, Matheson has added more conventional episodes, but has basically left the spirit of the stories, intact.

Neither script is better than the other. One is the poet translating the poet; the other is the craftsman explicating the work of his mentor. One is inspired but impractical; the other is diligent and professional. It's unfortunate that *both* films will not exist.

And what of **The Martian Chronicles,** the book itself? It's been translated into 30 foreign languages and is read the world over. Bradbury has written further Martian stories since 1950, and they have been printed in various magazines as "new adventures in The Martian Chronicles," but they have never been adopted as part of the original canon. Bradbury fans enjoy *everything* he writes, while admirers of **The Chronicles** alone are seemingly content with the single tome—the rest fall into a literary twilight zone.

The author himself is philosophic about it, however, and welcomes the advancing age of space with an ironic acceptance. There is more Homer than Nostradamus in Ray Bradbury's pen, and the magic of his own modern mythology sustains him even as science rapidly overtakes his wildest dreams of fiction.

Will he continue to be read now that we know that we know so much about the real Mars?

His reply is as wistfully hopeful as his work has always been, and every bit as colorful:

"This very year (1972), the long dusts are settling on Mars. The old pocked planetary face clears. Truth shines back to Earth.

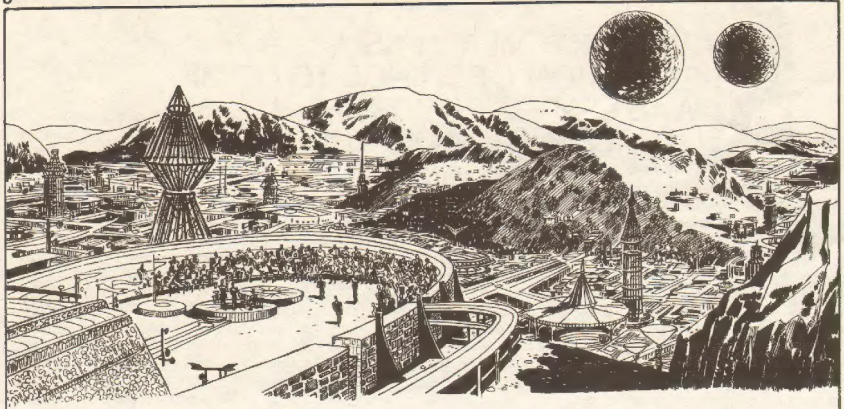
"And my Martians must to their tombs, I with them hoping, like Lazarus, to be summoned forth anew as what?

"As mythology...

"Do I dare believe that my Martians, wraith-like to begin with, with eyes like ancient monies, dusky of skin, sweet of voice, quiet of demeanor, will go with Grecian ghosts and rise up with Roman haunts? I would wish it so. And why not? These are my children. No man suffers the death of his offspring easily. If I can save mine, I will bend to the edge of the grave and stretch out my hand to do so.

"But forgive me for hoping that long after Mars is colonized and I am dead, my Martians will, late nights, come down out of the shallow hills to visit the new towns we will build up there. They will blow in dusts by the aluminum shanties wherever tomorrow's child may, against parental orders, read my **Chronicles** by flashlight under the covers, and shiver to think that my gods are blowing by in blue steams and white fires toward an alien morning."●

Bill Warren



DUSK ON THE PLANET MARS. THE ANCIENT CITIES STARTING TO BLOOM WITH LIGHT AMONG THE LOW BLUE HILLS. AS THE TWIN MOONS RISE... THROWING DOUBLE SHADOWS, EVERYWHERE... PEOPLE GATHER IN STONE AMPHITHEATRES, WEARING THEIR SILVER MASKS, AS MUSICIANS TUNE MOST STRANGE INSTRUMENTS, AND A SINGER APPEARS.

THE WOMAN SINGS IN THEIR ANCESTRAL LANGUAGE... AND IN THE MIDST OF SINGING STOPS, HER HAND TO HER THROAT, IN GREAT ALARM...

...FOR SUDDENLY STRANGE WORDS OF AN ALIEN SONG COMES FORTH, *"DRINK TO ME ONLY WITH THINE EYES..."*

THE AUDIENCE IS ON ITS FEET. THE STRANGE SONG HAS ALARMED THEM... AND A GREAT FIRE FILLS THE SKY... A NEW STAR MOVES ABOVE THEM...

THE AUDIENCE FLEES THE AMPHITHEATRE... ABANDONING MASKS AND INSTRUMENTS...

AND BEYOND, IN A VILLA, ABOVE THE TOWN, A WOMAN, ASLEEP, STIRS, TREMBLING WITH A DARK VISION... HER HUSBAND URGES HER AWAKE. *"WHAT?"* *"I DREAMT A MACHINE FELL DOWN FROM THE SKY,"* SHE SAYS, *"WITH MEN IN IT FROM A PLACE THEY CALLED EARTH."*

"SILLY," SAYS THE MAN, *"ONLY A DREAM!"* THEY GO TO STAND OUT UNDER THE STARS. PALE, SHIVERING, GAZING UP, THE WIFE SAYS, *"YES... ONLY A DREAM... BUT... I'M* ***AFRAID!***"

NEXT WEEK: "INVASION"

© 1979 Ray Bradbury

LANDED UPON THE PLANET MARS, SURROUNDED BY EARLY MORNING MIST, CAPTAIN WILDER AND HIS MEN WAIT, LISTENING. A COCK CROWS, FAINTLY. "BUT, SAYS PARKHILL, "A ROOSTER? CROWING? HERE ON MARS?"

A SCHOOL BELL TOLLS OFF IN THE FOG SOMEWHERE. A DOG BARKS. A PIANO STRIKES A SINGLE C. CHORD. CHILDREN'S VOICES RUN LAUGHING IN THE MIST. BASEBALL BATS CRACK... HARMONICAS PLAY. DRAWN, EACH BY A DIFFERENT SOUND, WILDER AND HIS MEN MOVE ACROSS THE LONG MEADOW OF FOG...

A GIRL'S VOICE SINGS, "OVER, ANNIE, OVER...!" A BOUNCING SOUND. WILDER LOOKS UP AS A BALL STRIKES AN UNSEEN ROOF THEN FALLS DOWN TO LAND AT HIS FEET.

"DON'T TOUCH IT!" SAYS PARKHILL. BUT WILDER TURNS THE OLD FAMILIAR BALL IN ONE HAND. AHEAD, DIM SEEN IN THE MIST, AN ANIMAL SHAPE LOOMS. CASUALLY, WILDER TOSSES THE BALL...

...WHICH STRIKES WITH A SOFT GONG AGAINST A VICTORIAN METAL DEER STANDING UPON A VAST GREEN LAWN...

AS IF AT A SIGNAL, THE FOG BLOWS AWAY, THE SUN BURNS BRIGHT, THE SHADOWS PASS. THE MEN LOOK UP AT BURSTS OF FLOWERING APPLE TREES...

...AND FIND THEMSELVES AMONG GREEN GARDENS, FRESH-PAINTED HOUSES WITH HIGH CUPOLAS, SINGING BIRD-CAGES, AND THE SOUNDS OF NOON WHISTLES, HORSE HOOFS CLOPPING, AND LAWN MOWERS CUTTING THE VAST CARPETS OF LUSH GRASS... "NO, NO, IT CAN'T BE," WILDER AND HIS MEN TURN IN WIDE CIRCLES, ASTOUNDED. "A SMALL AMERICAN TOWN! HERE ON **MARS?!!**""

© 1979 Ray Bradbury

GULLY FO
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THE

YLE IS MY NAME
CRA IS MY NATION
..DEEP SPACE IS
WELLING PLACE
ESTINATION

Gully Foyle is my name
And Terra is my nation.
Deep space is my dwelling place
The stars my destination.

To science fiction fans, that couplet is as well known as the **Star-spangled Banner** is to Americans. Once read, it is almost impossible to forget—especially in the context for which it was created, as the opening and closing of what has been called by the genre's top writers, "the most exciting, imaginative and audacious SF novel ever written, a book never equalled in scope and pacing."

It is the starting point of Alfred Bester's science fiction masterpiece, **The Stars My Destination**, and the object of the most ambitious graphic novel project to date illustrated in full-color by Howard Chaykin, whose collaboration with Samuel Delany last year produced **Empire**. **Stars** is slated for publication in two matching volumes to be released by Baronet this year.

The story chronicles the adventures of Gulliver Foyle—starship rigger, criminal and hero, poet and rogue—in an incredible future age when men are capable of physical long-distance travel *by thought alone*. The teleportation process, known as jaunting, threw the universe into social, economic and political revolution. Crime, madness and fear spread across the colonized planets like a plague until the universe was on the brink of total war.

As the sole survivor of a deep space disaster, Foyle unknowingly held the key to salvation-or the final destruction of mankind among the stars. His motivation was vengeance against those who left him stranded on the edge of space—and his violent odyssey takes him beyond the barrier of reality after crossing paths with a host of cunning and deadly adversaries all hoping to wrest his fantastic secret from him.

Stars is riddled with the unexpected, both in terms of plot and characters. Even beyond that, author Bester surrounds his action with dozens of the most imaginative devices and settings that compound the explosive situations which rapidly develop throughout the book. The protagonists across and re-cross with dazzling facility, each more fantastic than the next: Olivia Presteign, the beautiful, blind, albino socialite who could see only infra-red imagery; Y'ang-Yeovil, master spy from the intelligence Tong of the Inner Planets; Jisbella McQueen, the flame-haired crime-countess from a futuristic Devil's Island; Harley Baker, the surgeon who collected living abominations in his Freak Factory in Trenton; and Geoffrey Fourmyle, the playboy clown by day, black-garbed hunter of men by night—an alter ego of the irresistable Gully Foyle.

These characters, and a score of others, generate the kind of excitement few science fiction novels have even approached. The new two-volume graphic adaptation (produced by Byron Preiss) should further embellish that position. To find out how it all came about, **MEDIASCENE** contacted Alfred Bester, who filled in the background of the creation of **The Stars My Destination**.

MEDIASCENE: In almost any discussion with professional writers or fans about their favorite novels, **Stars** inevitably is mentioned. How do you feel about it, now that over twenty years has lapsed since it was written?

ALFRED BESTER: Much the same as I did then: quite simply, I was just trying to do the best possible job I could at the time, and fortunately, it looks I've succeeded. I began developing **Stars** during an extremely long stay in Europe, which was financed by the sale of a novel based on my TV experiences.

I based the opening sequence on an idea I spotted in an old **National Geographic**. It was about a sailor during World War II whose ship was torpedoed. He had survived on a makeshift raft for something like four months in the open sea. But the thing that really grabbed me was that he'd been sighted by several ships which *refused to rescue him* because Nazi submarines used decoys in a similiar manner to trick other vessels. I imagined the anguish he went through—then transposed the whole situation into deep space.

MS: In a way, **Stars** is the SF counterpart of **The Count of Monte Cristo**, with Gully Foyle in the Edmund Dantes role as the ultimate survivor with a revenge motive. Why this framework?

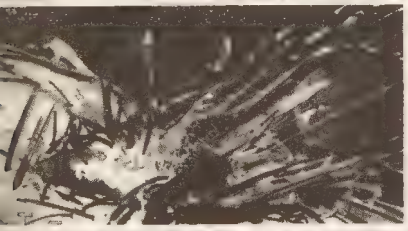
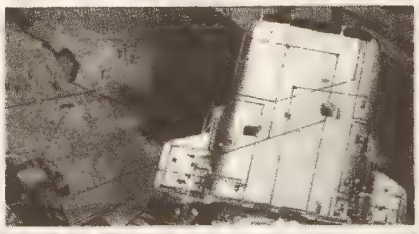
AB: As a kid, I was very impressed by the book. Then when I saw the film, it seemed even more glamorous and fascinating. I supposed it stayed with me, because when I began developing the survivor in the sea idea, the two somehow merged. I put myself in *his* place, and realized I'd be mad as hell to be passed by after four months on a raft. I'm no hero, but Gully Foyle is—and that's how this cosmic manhunt started. You see, I just naturally fell into **Monte Cristo**.

MS: Is there a lot of Bester in Gully Foyle?

AB: My friends used to say I was the original anti-hero, but I'm really a boy scout. All kidding aside, I've heard that a number of times, so their may some truth to it after all.

MS: Are there pieces of other classics threading their way through **Stars**? There could be a correlation between Baker's Freak Factory and the **Island of Dr. Moreau**, or even Geoff Fourmyle and Don Diego Vega's alter ego, Zorro.

AB: Certainly. I wanted a play of opposites and did the obvious thing by turning a real rugged character into a fop. You see, I got off to a very slow start with **Stars**. I was in London when I began to write it, and things just weren't going well. Maybe it was simply too cold there to work. Anyway, my wife and I packed up, crossed the ferry at Dover and drove south to Italy. That's one of the reasons there are so many European locations in the

story, such as the Spanish Stairs sequence in Rome. I wrote the book right there.

JS: That explains some of the unusual settings, but how about the profusion of wild and imaginative touches that seem to crop up on almost every page—like the Russian sect that practiced sense-castration or the implant operation that turned Foyle into an electronic fighting machine activated by a miniature switchboard located in his teeth?

AB: Those ideas probably came out of my Commonplace Book, a thick, oversize volume—weighs about forty-six pounds—full of notes, clippings and cuttings that I've been saving for years. It was one of the few things I took with me to Europe, besides my thesaurus and a typewriter.

The real reason there are so many "throwaway" ideas is because as I go over a story again and again drafting and redrafting, I begin to lose interest and even faith in it—the novelty begins to *wear down*. So in order to entertain myself and keep the material fresh and sparkling, I begin to add bits and pieces to bring it back to life. It might be classified as a lack of faith in the raw material or my ability to develop it, but, in any case, it's become a compulsion with me.

MS: You have a knack for names, a way of making them describe personality.

AB: Yes, I spend quite a bit of time on names. Each one has to have a different color, a different rhythm, and a different syllable count. I read phone books, directories, newspapers, anything that'll help me put the right names together.

I thought of the name Gully Foyle while I was still in England. I've always been fond of the name Gulliver, but, in this case, it came from a book I had been reading at the time, titled **The Horse's Mouth**. The hero's name was Gully Jimson. The Foyle came from an automobile rental agency.

MS: I'm not sure that your fans are aware of the fact that you began your career by writing for both the pulps and the comics, as did Otto Binder, Henry Kuttner, Herb Gold, Ed Hamilton, Gardner Fox and Manly Wade Wellman. As the story goes, Batman's top scripter, Bill Finger, taught you the comics formula of writing for pictures. Could this be the reason that in your books every sentence could be a comic panel and every paragraph a page?

AB: Absolutely. Writing for pulps, comics, radio and TV have made me think of my stories completely in visual terms. You know I've always played around with typography in my novels, and the one I'm working on now goes even further. The working title is **Golem**[100], and it's half science fiction, half fantasy, half contemporary, half graphic.

What I'm aiming for—assuming I have enough talent to pull it off, which I doubt—is to produce a book not *just* in print alone, but in sounds and smells and pictures, a synthetic novel that combines *all of the art forms* so that the impact on the audience is total. That concept probably grew as a result of the different mediums for which I wrote.

MS: You scripted many radio shows in the 40s and 50s including **The Shadow**, **Nick Carter** and **Charlie Chan**. **Stars** embodies the elements of fast-paced adventure, mystery, romance and even a little comedy much like those melodramas. With that in mind, do you consider **Stars** more science fiction or space opera?

AB: That's tough one. To begin I consider the genre to be the least restrictive of them all; it's the *last real free form* for a writer, open to almost any experiment. *You* might describe **Stars** as *more* than space opera, and *less* than speculative fiction. But I think of what I write only as extravaganza, as entertainment.

Let me put it this way, what I want to do is bang the reader—and they can take that *any* way they want to.

MS: They probably will. We understand that Brian DePalma, who made **Sisters**, **Carrie** and **The Fury**, is about to prepare your novel, **The Demolished Man**, as his next film. Has any option been taken on **Stars**?

AB: Many times. It's been sold and re-sold. I have nothing to do with that aspect of it, because when I sold it, science fiction wasn't what it is today. I was dirt poor at the time and I let it go for $5000 or whatever. Now I get calls all the time inquiring about the rights so maybe it'll be made after all.

MS: Years ago, Australian artist Stanley Pitt drew a series of Sunday pages with the hope of turning **Stars** into a syndicated newspaper series. His approach was very formal, while the Chaykin/Preiss version is quite experimental.

AB: I definitely *prefer* the experimental approach to the conventional one. There's almost no comparing them. As far as the graphics are concerned, I think they're marvelous. I've seen the art and I approve completely. I do know that it'll be great fun to read, at least from my point of view.

MS: Do you realize that your career has come full circle? You began your career in the comics, and now, thirty years later, your work is being adapted into one of the most ambitious visual novel projects ever attempted. Any comment?

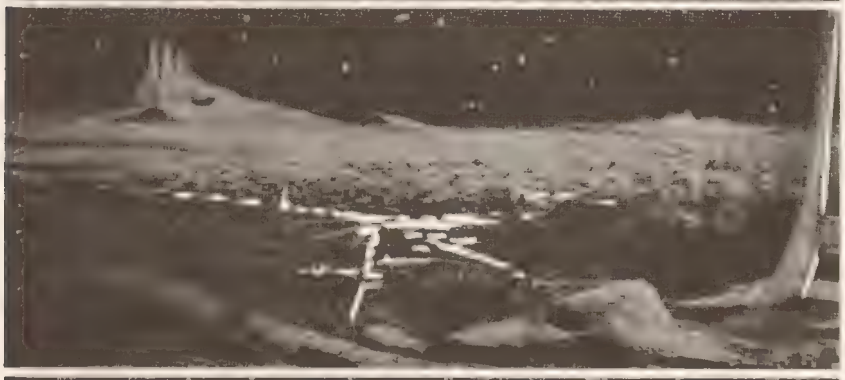
AB: I hadn't really thought about it that way, but you're right. Occasionally I'll stop in at DC Comics just to talk shop, because I was one of their top writers at one time. They'll tell me: "Hey, Al, you couldn't write comics anymore—they've changed completely!" And I guess they have. One of the things I really like about today's comics is their tempo. I'm obsessed with it.

MS: Are you trying to tell us you'd be interested in doing comics again?

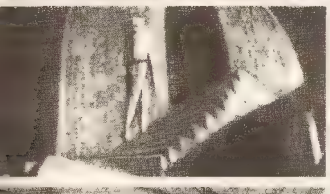
AB: Sure, if the price was right! One thing I am certain of, is that comics are a high art form. I was pleased to be part of it then, and I'm even more pleased to be part of it now.

MARTIAN CHRONICLES

PART TWO: THE SCREENPLAYS



© 1979 Michael Minor All the paintings used on these pages were created by Michael Minor for **The Martian Chronicles,** and are used with his permission



Comparing screenplays prepared by two different writers for the same project can be a tedious chore, simply because the material is fundamentally identical. **The Martian Chronicles** scripts fortunately break the rule due to the fact that the Ray Bradbury and Richard Matheson versions are not only distanced by fourteen years in conception, but were planned with radically different time, financial, perceptual and creative limitations.

The two screenplays also offer a unique opportunity to examine the work of a highly creative pulp-era artisan next to that of an equally successful second generation TV and film craftsman applying his skills to enliven the written word in visual terms. The images and incidents chosen by each writer to unfold his version of the story are revealing of their differing philosophic points of view.

An essential factor to be remembered in comparing the relative merits of the scripts is time—film time—two hours of fast-breaking plot development as opposed to approximately six hours of more leisurely-paced character continuity with a multitude of commercial breaks. Nevertheless, both employ an episodic construction like that used in the book, allowing for a concise exposition of a great deal of material within given limits.

Bradbury's script was originally intended for production in 1964, with Gregory Peck in the role of Colonel Wilder. The overall effect sought was to capture the aspect of humanity intruding on an alien environment, somewhat comparable to the atmosphere evoked by **Planet of the Apes**—a barren, unsympathetic landscape in which Man is the outsider, established from the very first scene:

uly 11, 1999.

The numbers mean nothing to the inhabitants of a small Martian civilization, which unconcernedly goes about its daily chores. Everyone wears an exotic, shining mask, Martian children play a carefree skipping game, cooking is done on shimmering tables of bubbling silver lava, and a singer weaves a lilting melody with her softly musical voice. Life goes on under a cold blue sky, next to the dry bed of a dead sea. The Martians and their ancestors have lived here in serenity for ten centuries, but today, *something* will happen—something *new*—something *most* unusual.

"Drink to me only with thine eyes, and I will pledge with mine..." The words and the tune rise unbidden, meaningless yet melodious, from the baffled Martian vocalist's throat. The children's playing assumes the ritualistic cadence of a new game they instinctively recognize as *hopscotch*.

Fear-filled eyes search the now-threatening skies, and the entire planet trembles at the unsettling disturbance encroaching upon its tranquility. The glittering twinkle of danger goes unnoticed until it takes the form of a needle-shaped spaceship descending for a landing. With a bellowing roar of fire and fury, the craft settles down, then disgorges a strange spidery machine that proceeds to scamper inquisitively over the dry, brown terrain. It is an unmanned exploration vehicle, silently radioing pictures, statistics and data to a waiting world—beeping a triumphant message of success across a sea of space.

uly 14, 1999.

Thirty-six hours have passed without incident, and Colonel Wilder leads the first manned expedition to explore the Martian surface only to discover a dying world. The Mars-probe was contaminated with small-pox bacteria, which raced through the unprotected civilization, rapidly reducing them to dry, black flakes, like the spent leaves of autumn.

Wilder is dismayed by the unforseen development, but drawn by the stark dignity of the ancient planet. One of the crewmen, Spender, is particularly an guished by the planet-wide genocide, and empathisizes with the Martians to the point of feeling he is one of them.

Returning to the spacecraft for a night of rest, the Earthmen are startled the next morning by the crowing of a rooster and the familiar sound of an old-fashioned Earth piano playing *Beautiful Ohio*. Across a neat green lawn, each crewman finds a living, breathing echo from his own past—long dead family members, long lost friends, pets, familiar landmarks.

The Earthmen find an idyllic life of joy on Mars, but ironically, it is Spender who eventually realizes that they are all being deceived: the few remaining Martians have read their minds during the night. Their dreams, memories and fantasies have created and populated an idealized and heavenly world. When the other crewmen eventually learn the truth, the dream people vanish, the town flies into flinders and is borne away on the breeze, and night becomes noon. The Earthmen are left bewildered, standing in strangely empty Martian ruins.

ugust 22, 1999.

Spender, haunted by the loss of Mars' civilization, dons a Martian mask and decides to take personal revenge for the mass-murder of a planet. He straps on a flying belt, proclaims himself a Martian and ambushes one of his fellow crewmen. Pausing only to put on their own flying belts, Wilder and the rest of the crew take-off after Spender through a vaulted Martian canyon, the walls of which are covered with gigantic carvings. Finally, Wilder himself corners and shoots the crazed Spender, whose broken body slides down one of the giant carved faces, leaving a long red streak. The streak takes on the appearance of a tear, shed for the dead of two worlds.

Wilder and the other survivors move into the ruins, adapting themselves to the spartan existence of true Martians, awaiting rescue from the next Earth ship which will surely follow.

uly 1, 2001.

Hordes of colonizing spaceships descend on Mars like silver-skinned locusts, and the camera's eye dispassionately observes by moving among them, revealing the rugged terran pioneers. Time passes in a swift montage as towns spring up, the women arrive, along with the men of religion, including a pivotal character named Father Peregrine.

uly 21, 2002.

An enterprising millionaire, named Driscoll, arrives on Mars, but cannot breath the thin air. He returns to Earth, and when he comes again to Mars he brings seeds, plants and flowers. Flying over the barren planet, he scatters the seeds of life everywhere in the wilderness. Then a light rain falls and Mars, the once desolate red planet, becomes a living green world, and the Martian atmosphere is flooded with life-giving oxygen, inviting further colonization and development.

ovember, 2009.

Members of the new breed of space-settlers, LaFarge and his wife Anna, have come to Mars to retire and pass serenely through old age. Their only regret is that they have had to leave behind the body of their long-dead son in an Earth cemetary. During the night, LaFarge hears an unfamiliar noise and rushes outside to find his son, still young and full of life, standing in the rain. The next day, the boy joins them and makes their lives whole again, but stubbornly refuses to visit the nearby mining town. Anna joyously accepts the boy as her son, miraculously restored to her, but LaFarge suspects the lad is really a Martian, recalling their legendary ability to transform themselves to fit Earthmen's dreams and memories. The reincarnated boy has apparently been drawn to the old couple by their great loneliness, and their wistful hopes have given him shape.

Life passes happily for the reunited family trio, until Anna demands they all make a visit to town—they've been out of touch with people for much too long. Once in the city, however, the poor Martian is mentally and physically torn by the desires of the people surrounding him, and without seeking it, he finds himself uncontrollably shifting and melting to take the forms of others' lost loved ones. Fleeing, he takes refuge in a church, where the intense desires for religious fulfillment of Father Peregrine cause the helpless Martian to momentarily take on the suffering appearance of Jesus Christ.

Bolting blindly form the church, the overwhelmed Martian finally realizes that the strains of living among Earthmen are insurmountable. Sadly, he flees from the mining town, back to the serenity and companionship of his own kind in the old, silent hills.

uly, 2015.

A diverse group of people, including an aging Colonel Wilder, take a yacht voyage to an old, legendary city that the Martians themselves mysteriously fled years before. They follow the ancient canal channels, and so find the city's entrance where aerial searches had missed it, concealed beneath a rock overhang and hollowed out of the base of a mountain

Their arrival acts as a signal for the automated city to come to life—their fantasies supplying its program of delights. An on-the-skids actor finds a theater filled with a robot audience, encouraging him to begin performing. An actress, fearful of loosing her looks because of advancing age, finds a vast hall of mirrors reflecting only the beauty and youth she wants to see. Parkhill, a mechanic and member of Wilder's original expedition, finds a super repair shop, and wades into it like a kid in a toy store. The millionaire who has sponsored the yacht trip suspects that there is more to the city than fun and games, however, and treads cautiously while the others pursue their dreams with abandon.

Gradually, the dark side of the human psyche begins to manifest itself, tainting the city's wonders with the shadows of fear. A poet with a nagging wife discovers an arcade machine which allows him to savagely kill himself over and over, thus expiating a deep-seated death-wish. The poet's wife mysteriously disappears into the bowels of the city.

Wilder himself enters a universe machine, which offers him a series of worlds to rule over, but he refuses the fantasy because he knows that that he has not earned the right to lead them. A hunter finds an arsenal of deadly weapons, and decides to try out what appears to be a matter-disintegrator to stalk and destroy the city itself, but the gun turns out to be a simple invisibility ray, and he is killed as a result of his violent foolishness.

With the coming of nightfall, the miracle-city, as if recogniz-

ing its inability to be all things to all people, begins to close in upon itself. Only Colonel Wilder, the millionaire yachtsman, the actress' maid and the suicidal poet recognize the portents of doom and self-obsolescence, barely escaping the collapse of the city, which seals Mars' past from its future with grim finality.

August 10, 2020.

Colonial factory worker, Tomas Gomez, decides to take a two-day vacation, and pauses to talk with an energetic old man working at a filling station. The old man is thrilled with the wonders surrounding him, while Tomas is more selfishly searching for something more out of life. Tomas then speeds away in his hovercraft, but soon notices that he is being paced by an old Martian sandship.

Halting, Gomez and the Martian disembark, and even though there is a language barrier, they soon discover that they are mutually ghosts to one another, from distinctly different eras in Mars' history. The Martian is alive in the Mars of the past, and sees Tomas as a spectral figure from the planet's future; Gomez, as part of the present, sees the Martian as a phantom artifact from an ancient age.

They communicate only vaguely through hand-signals, but their exchange is an amicable acceptance of each other's presence, and the only genuine meeting between a Man and a Martian as true equals. But even as such contact has proven impossible in the present, so too is it doomed by the vagaries of time, which inevitably return the two travelers to their own planes of reality.

May 7, 2028.

A cataclysmic war is building on Earth, and most of the colonizers loyally elect to return to their home planet. Wilder makes his own plans to launch a fleet of starships out of the solar system, away from the insanity of war, programmed to reach for the hand of God in the far corners of the galaxy.

On Earth, the madness, futility and waste of war leave the once-shining green planet as barren and desolate as Mars was when Wilder first set foot on it. Only the mindless, mechanical functions of automated robot caretakers remain to mark the passage of Man and his mighty intellect, and even they are laid low by an accidental whim of nature.

Among the interstellar survivors, tragedy and triumph go hand in hand. Wilder's starship is hit by a meteor, and he and Father Peregrine, among others, are tossed out, still in their spacesuits, falling away from one another. The threads of fate and destiny which have tied them together is finally unravelling, and Wilder finds himself drifting towards Mars, which has beckoned and dominated him throughout his adult life.

On the Martian surface, a young boy looks up and makes a wish on a falling star (Wilder's body burning brightly upon re-entering the atmosphere), and then joins his father to peer into the canal for his first sight of the Martians. What they see are *their own faces* reflecting back up at them in the waters below.

The Story Teller, an off-screen narrator who has been relating the Martian Chronicles throughout and bridging the gaps between the years, concludes:

"...If Earth was the birthing place of humankind, Mars was the waystation on the voyage toward eternity. There, man rested a little while in the shade before pressing on with yet more starships into the universe."

The stage directions call for a metaphoric ending to the immortal saga of adventure among the stars: "Against a star-filled sky, in utter silence, save for the blowing of the soft Martian wind, a boy's hand reaches into the frame. In the hand is a dandelion, which fluffs and blows away. All the seeds fly up in the air and away to mix with the stars. We fly with the seeds, we drift on out with the float of the dandelion fluffs, among the stars, where the Universe is waiting."

In this optimistic, faintly melancholy note, Ray Bradbury closed his book of **The Martian Chronicles** on film. For fifteen years it has lain shut, representing a work of art that might have been. When the NBC-TV production finally began production in 1978, Bradbury's vision of **The Chronicles** did not meet the specifications required for the six-hour form, so an entirely new teleplay was commissioned from Richard Matheson, who took up the challenge of translating the original classic of science-fiction literature into cinematic reality.

Unlike Bradbury, Matheson chose to pursue a more dramatic course of action. People and their continuing relationships are the foundation of his more complex screenplay—a point of view dictated by his decision to introduce the principle characters before the first rocket to Mars ever lifts off.

January, 1999.

PART ONE: "The Expeditions."

An intemperate snow is falling on Florida. Captain Wilder's family is playing in the white winter carpet, while he busies himself at the launching base, consoling his friend, Spender, who is unhappy about being left out of the initial exploration flight.

The first manned expedition to Mars is about to take off, staffed by officers York and Conover. When their rocket rises off the launching pad, the snow and ice will melt in the first blazing heat of an intense, fiery rocket summer.

Simultaneously, on Mars, Yila, a Martian woman, dreams of the approaching ship, envisioning strangely-garbed men with white skin and blue eyes, on their way from the uninhabitable planet Earth. They seem to be nearing her, and she finds herself inexplicably drawn to York, without ever having seen him.

Her husband, Mr. K, is disbelieving at first, but becomes concerned when his wife says the ship has touched down, and that she must go elsewhere; an elsewhere that will eventually take her beyond the landing site. Mr. K dons his glowing mask of conflict and goes out with his hunting gun. Two shots echo across the valleys of Mars, and Mr. K returns, assuring his wife that she need no longer worry—there are no Earthmen on Mars.

April, 2000.

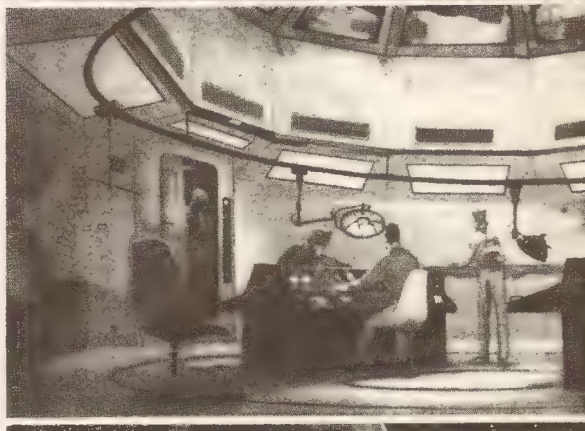
The second expedition lands in a dense area of fog, commanded by officers Black, Lustig and Hinkston. At daybreak, the fog begins to clear, and they see a stone lawn deer on a rich, green carpet of grass. The view out the porthole clears even more, and reveals Green Bluff, Illinois, a rural town looking exactly as it did in the late 1970s back on Earth. Black, the most moved, is met to his astonishment and joy by his long-dead brother, Edward. His mother, father and girlfriend, Marilyn, are also there to meet him. Lustig and Hinkston are apparently enjoying tearful reunions with their own departed relatives, in the safety of their childhood homes.

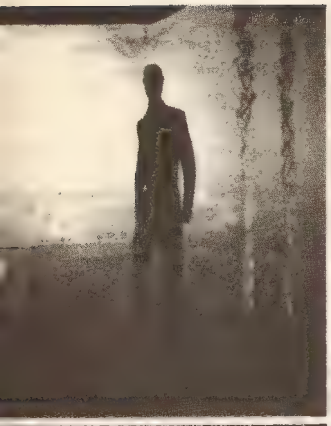
Black suspects deception of some sort, and cajoles his brother Edward into admitting that he is really a Martian, and that all Black has seen is merely an illusion drawn from his dreams. Edward explains that the Martians are terrified of Earthly strife and conflict, and sorrowfully begs Black's forgiveness for having to kill him. (At this point, Matheson explicitly notes in his screenplay that physical contact between Earthmen and Martians is absolutely impossible.)

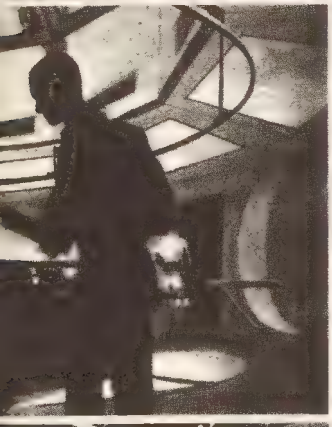
Back on Earth, Wilder casually mixes a drink in his computerized bar. Several members of his crew, who are to form the third expedition group, are visiting, along with Wilder's brother, Bill, who does not hear the siren call of space, and prefers to remain on Earth.

June, 2001.

The third expedition arrives. There are six crew members, the largest force so far, including Wilder, Spender and Parkhill. Searching for their lost predecessors, they find Mars locked in its death throes; four out of five nearby cities had crumbled over a thousand years ago, but







the rest of the Martians have died within the past week—from chicken pox. A few Martians have undoubtedly made their way to safety in the hills, but their days are numbered. Spender eulogizes them mournfully:

"A race creates itself for a million years. Refines itself. Builds itself great cities. Then it dies, part in its own time, with dignity. But the rest? Do they perish of some majestic affliction? No, by all that's holy, they die of a disease that doesn't kill the youngest child on Earth."

Spender shows further signs of being intensely absorbed by the lost Martians, and as the expedition probes an ancient city, endures the jibes of one of his fellow crewman. The taunting only serves to trigger a stubborn decision to stay behind in the city after the others have left. Later, Spender rejoins his companions, boldly stating that a Martian has commandeered all his clothing, that the figure standing before them is obviously that Martian—and proceeds to coldly kill three of the crewmen. After an intense chase, Spender, who claims he has now become more Martian than Earthman, is confronted by Wilder. Spender begs Wilder to warn the people who will be coming from Earth against destroying the irreplacable heritage and remnants of civilization still left on Mars, and to learn from the wealth of Martian artifacts all around them.

Wilder is Spender's best friend on the expedition, and he is sympathetic to the arguments, even to the point of feeling an intense desire to meet a living Martian. But he is still the commander of the exploratory force, and knows there is only one solution to their problem with Spender.

Later, when Wilder and the remaining crewmen finally corner and approach Spender, they find him fully dressed in a Martian mask and robe. He is huddled in a slack bundle of lifeless flesh and bones against a wall of stone. Unable to resolve the Earthman/Martian conflict within, he has killed himself.

February, 2004.

PART TWO: "The Settlers"

The colonization of Mars takes place in an industrious montage sequence of Earthmen settling on Mars, and among them are Father Peregrine and Father Stone. The priests are shown around the settlement by Wilder, who points out vague hints of the common Earth/Mars ancestry. Peregrine instantly becomes determined to discover if the Martians knew the One True God, and decides to build them a church of deliverance. In a fit of missionary zeal, he even contrives to deliberately get himself and the very skeptical Father Stone lost in the wilderness.

They are wandering through a narrow canyon when a violent Marsquake begins to shake the walls around them. Then, out of the sky, plummet shimmering blue balls of phosphorescent light which lift the two priests to the top of the crevice, then zoom off.

Peregrine is convinced that they have had an encounter with a type of Martian, and while Father Stone sleeps that night, he deliberately tests the Fire Balloons by stepping off the cliff. Once again, the balls of light arrive to save him, and the astonished priest converses briefly with the glowing orbs. The Fire Balloons admit that they are an advanced form of Martian, and do indeed know of the One True God, at which point Father Peregrine begs to be allowed to provide them with a church. Almost condescendingly, one speaks:

"Once we had bodies such as yours. Then we learned to free ourselves and so took on the look of blue fire.

"We have lived in the winds and the skies since then, apart from those we left behind. How we came to be has been forgotten. But we shall never die. We have put away the weaknesses of the body and live in the grace of that being whom you call God. We thank you for the thought of building us a church. But we have no need of it, for each of us is a temple unto himself. Build your church among your kind and cleanse *them. We* are at peace."

In the morning, Peregrine is unable to convince Father Stone of the reality of his nocturnal discussion, and admits that despite his disappointment in not being able to provide missionary service for the Martians, he still hopes to someday meet Jesus Christ himself.

2004-2006.

Pioneering Earthmen begin naming cities and places on Mars after members of the first Martian expeditions: York Plain, Wilder Mountain, Spender Hill, Peregrine Canyon and Lustig Creek.

By September, 2006, David Lustig's parents have moved to Mars, and are settled in a homestead where their son died as a member of the Second Expedition. Their sedentary lives of quiet mourning for David are shaken one day when the lost explorer abruptly turns up, young and healthy, singing in the rain. Lustig knows that he's not really their son, but his wife, willingly, almost desperately accepts him. Despite "David's" misgivings and resistance, Anna insists that all three, now reunited, take a trip to town as a celebration.

Once they arrive in the city, the unconscious desires of outsiders soon begin to have an unsettling physical and emotional effect on "David," pulling him inexorably away from the Lustigs. The old man begins to search for the missing youth, and runs into Wilder, who realizes exactly what the returned David Lustig really is. The old, unfulfilled desire to meet a living Martian overwhelms Wilder, who begins his own search of the town.

Father Peregrine, who has erected his church in this rustic wilderness, is stunned to encounter a strange young man hiding in the shadows of his tabernacle. From wounds in the man's palms, blood drips slowly into the baptismal font. Peregrine appears to be facing Jesus himself, who gently tells the aged priest that it is only his own intense longing which has caused this Shape to manifest itself before him. Turning, the strange man flees once more into the streets.

The Martian then seeks refuge in the shape of a girl thought drowned, and attempts to escape by joining her family. Lustig sees through the deception, and encourages the fugitive to become David again so that they can unobtrusively leave town. Other townpeople begin to crowd around, however, and their impassioned need to see someone dear to their hearts cause the Martian to begin to melt like wax, assuming one shape after another, until the strain overtaxes his powers and suffocates his sensitive soul, leaving him a misshapen corpse wearing the parts of many Earthly bodies, but with no features of his own.

The months pass, and Wilder learns that a major war is expected on Earth. He makes plans to return home for a last attempt to rescue his brother and family.

As he heads for the spaceport, he stops to talk to Parkhill, who had been a member of Wilder's own Mars expedition, and is now the owner of a cafe near a site targeted for heavy industrial development. Wilder is annoyed at Parkhill's eagerness to convert Mars into a replica of Earth's proven folly, but he wishes his old crewmate well, and leaves for Earth.

After Wilder leaves, a strange masked figure approaches Parkhill—a living Martian. As the strange being reaches into his cloak for something, the frightened Parkhill shoots him dead. Then, far away across the sand, Parkhill and his wife see a fleet of sandboats, manned by Martians, swiftly approaching. Fearing retaliation, the cafe owner flees in his own craft, but is swiftly brought to a halt.

To Parkhill's astonishment, the masked Martians crytically give him a formal deed to area that encompasses half of the planet. Astounded, the new land baron returns to his cafe and makes grandiose plans for the future.

Suddenly his wife, gazing through their telescope aimed at Earth, sees a scene of horror; even at this distance, the Final War is visible. Parkhill's wife grimly observes that it's no longer likely workers will be arriving to build their factories, and sardonically concludes that it "Looks as though it's going to be an off-season."

Time has lost its meaning.

PART THREE:

On Earth, Wilder visits the deserted Mission Control Center where his brother worked. Switching on a remote recording device, he sees a videotape of his brother and fellow workers evaporated by the lethal rays of a neutron bomb. Wilder realizes that Earth is no longer the home of Man, and turns once again to the Martian jewel in space.

Back on the almost-deserted fourth planet, Driscoll (another survivor of the Third Expedition) wanders slowly through a silent town, longing for female companionship, tossing dozens of half-dollars down the empty streets just to hear the noise they create. Then, a phone rings...

Scrambling to the building containing the ringing phone, Driscoll arrives too late to catch the call, so he frantically begins calling numbers alphabetically. Recognizing the futility of such an approach, he switches to beauty parlors, and finally reaches Genevieve, in a city far away. Leaping into a car, he drives day and night until he arrives in her town. Seeing her, he can't believe his eyes: Genevieve is a vision of loveliness. Her hair may be dyed, and the make-up applied a little too heavily, but to Driscoll she's beautiful.

It only takes a short while for the infatuated man to realize that he has not found the girl of his dreams, but a vain, self-centered chatterbox who only needs him as the mechanic she's been needing to repair her all-important machines. She does not see him as a new Adam or father to her unborn children. He is just a slave. At the first opportunity, Driscoll beats a hasty retreat, moving halfway around Mars to a little town where he unplugs all the phones and plans to spend the rest of his life in blissful solitude.

The scene shifts to the dwelling of an elderly man named Hathaway, who lives in a hillside hut above an abandoned town with his wife and daughter. Hungry for human contact, he continually scans the skies for passers by; he glimpses a rocket once, and blinks all the lights in town to attract its attention, but to no avail.

On a world without clocks or calendars, the day finally comes when Wilder and Father Stone arrive before Hathaway's hut. They are astonished at the youth of the two women, and Wilder is unsettled to find a pair of graves with their names on the markers. At first he suspects that his quest for contact with a Martian will finally come to an end, but soon realizes that they are only life-like robots, made by Hathaway to ease his loneliness through the long years. By now, however, the old man has forgotten that they are machines.

The excitement of contact with real humans proves to be too much for old Hathaway, and he passes away in the night, quietly, happily. Wilder talks for a while with the robot-wife, and comes to the decision that the best thing he can do is to leave

WILLIAM STOUT DRAGON SLAYERS

Here's heroic fantasy in the most spectacular sense of the term! A legion of unconquerable steel-thewed champions from the four corners of the world—battling the most dangerous demon beasts ever created in the pages of fantastic mythology. Armed with deadly battle-axes, broadswords, pikes and daggers, they must face their hellspawned-adversaries in titanic death-duels that shake the very earth itself with fire and fury. Emerging through the fabric if time to fulfill their violent destinies, six dynamic dragon slayers come to life to reinact the thundering conflicts that have made their names legend in the universe. Their battle-cry echoes through the ages to inspire a superb work of art.

Fantasy illustrator, William Stout has created the pure essence of sword and sorcery adventure art in his remarkable new portfolio, **Dragon Slayers.** Summoning a host of knights, gladiators, swordsmen and swashbucklers through the magic and mastery of his enchanted pen, Stout visualizes on paper the epic triumphs and turbulent action of an imaginary age of monsters and men of war. From Siegfried and the fire-breathing lizard to Sinbad and the prehistoric Roc to Hiawatha and the twin-headed serpent, **Dragon Slayers** conjures up all the splendor and savagery of the classic struggle. Six superb plates plus an illustrated folder and protective envelope. Limited to 1000 signed and numbered copies. $10.

them in the hut, living out their pre-programed lives.

Wilder and Father Stone leave, but the story of the robots takes an unexpected turn when the reclusive Driscoll lands his helicopter near the hut and cautiously approaches. Believing that he is speaking to real women, he explains to the robots that he is unbearably lonely and needs companionship. "You have" she tells him, "come to precisely the right place."

Stopping off at Parkhill's cafe, Wilder is frustrated to learn that he so narrowly missed contact with real Martians. He drives towards home moodily, stopping near a ruined city, thinking back to Spender and his hopes for a Mars that would reflect the highest aspirations of both Earthmen and Martians. As he stands lost in thought, a blue fire approaches from across the desert—a fire that soon takes on the alien lines of a Martian sandship.

For the first time, Wilder (and the audience) see a living Martian clearly. But is he living? Wilder quickly percieves that he and his new companion are mutually ghosts from different eras. The Martian views his surroundings in their full richness of life, as they were a hundred thousand years ago, while Wilder can see only bleak ruins on a dying world.

They talk for a while and form a strange friendship that is doomed to end as soon as it begins. The Martian is at peace in his beloved Tyrr (the Martian name for their planet), and knows that it will continue to be real as long as he goes on living. Wilder exists with the knowledge that he can enjoy no such contentment, and must struggle to make the best of his inhereted home.

Wilder is disappointed. He had hoped to learn, "about your people, your beliefs. The secret of your life on Mars."

The Martian is merely amused, "There is no secret. Anyone with eyes can see the way to live by watching life; observing nature. And cooperating with it. By living life for itself...deriving pleasure from the gift of pure being. Life is its own answer! Accept it and enjoy it, day by day.

"Leave, unsullied and untouched, all that is beautiful. Hold that which lives in all reverance...but that is no secret." The Martian smiles at the transfixed Wilder. "You are intelligent. You know as well as I what has to be done."

Then the Martian, with best wishes, withdraws to his own time and his own people, leaving Wilder to ponder his destiny. This meeting has proved to be more instructive than he'd dared hope—yet somehow less.

Returning home, Wilder reviews all the things that have happened to him on Mars, and reaches a decision. He announces to his wife and children that they are going up the canal to a Martian town for a picnic. They cruise along the waterway for a while before choosing an appropriate spot. His wife, knowing what he is planning, persuades him not to try to adopt the Martian way of life too quickly. They must gradually acclimate themselves to the new way of approaching a future that is being imposed upon them.

Wilder then makes the first significant gesture that will shape his own new world, and that of his children's. Promising to show his son some real, live Martians, Wilder leads the way to the nearby canal bank. In the distance, the rocket he had used to travel to Earth and back so many times explodes, sealing their fate forever. Contentedly, Wilder points down into the canal water, and the Martians are there—reflections staring silently back up at them for a long, long time form the gently rippling water.

Comparing the Bradbury and the Matheson scripts is an interesting exercize; Matheson apparently had access to the author's original work when preparing his own. The sequence in which the Martian takes on the form of Jesus is *not* part of the book, but exists in *both* screenplays.

Bradbury's script, rich and evocative, is actually more of a screen treatment, not yet planned out in terms of scenes and shots,

Both Bradbury and Matheson chose many of the same key chapters from **The Martian Chronicles** to advance their stories, but their handling creates entirely different feelings about the material.

Bradbury wrote the original Chronicles during a period of great world-wide passions encompassing euphoria, disillusion and fear in the post-WW II 1940s, when spaceflight was a remote, but hopeful, goal of the future. Because of these factors, and his own relative youth, the author created a series of tales filled with emotions as well as ideas. By the time he undertook the screenplay, however, Bradbury had seen man achieve space, the problems of the world become larger, and matured in his general view on life.

As a result, the 1964 screenplay displays a revisionist point of view, tempering many of the more violent melodramatics with a deeper philosophic insight. As the original creator, he has taken the liberty of improving and mellowing his own creation to pose moral questions from a different frame of reference.

This aspect is excellently illuminated in the *Mars is Heaven* sequence, common to both screenplays. In Matheson's adaptation, the revelation that the townspeople are really Martians is a sad one; the Martians deplore the fact that they *must* kill the Earthmen. These deaths, and many others occur throughout the original book, but in Bradbury's treatment, most of the killings have been eliminated. The characters live.

This decision was no doubt made primarily because Bradbury has subtly shifted his sights on his own material, working hard to make his vision epic, creating one splendid and awe-inspiring scene after another. In the process, he has also infused it with an aura of tragedy in the classical sense.

There is an undeniably low-key resonance to the Bradbury script as it almost painfully sings a funereal chant for the inevitable rape of the Martian civilization, and the suicidal self-hatred of Earth. He has removed much of the graphic violence and substituted a thoughtful, quiet despair in its place.

Conversely, Matheson has preserved more of the kinetic energy of the original work by remaining less metaphysical and more Earthbound. He presents **The Chronicles** in a simple, honest fashion, documenting the good and evil that men do, but leavening it with human frailty and sardonic humor. He has also retailored the overall work to give it greater poignancy in humanistic terms.

Bradbury's meeting between LaFarge and the ghostly Martian comes just before Earth's destruction, and merely reaffirms the two individual's kinship across the boundaries of time and space. Matheson has artfully transposed the scene closer to the end, and given it to the ever-searching Wilder, so that it not only satisfies the aging space explorer's cherished dream, but also forces him to face up to the fact that the future is in his own hands—literally. This resolve allows the Earthman/Martian reflections in the canal scene to form a solid capstone for the series of stories, giving the "we are them" revelation the true sense of moral gravity and optimistic continuity it had in the book.

Bradbury's film ending has a false ring as it artificially attempts to graft on an out of place scene meant to present the idea that man was born to explore the stars. The vital canal scene is thus diminished in impact to make way for a tag-line that vainly tries to find a hopeful counterpoint for the unblunted decimation of two worlds. The imagery invoked cannot bear this burden however—the hero of the story has just died because the stars have casually rejected him and consigned him to an insignificant twinkling death—the dandelion seeds are tossed about by the passing breeze without purpose, unmotivated by conscience or intellect—any moral lessons to be learned from the recounting of the chronicles is thus rendered a waste of time. In **2001**, Kubrick's ape-man tossed the bone into the air and it became a spaceship because over the centuries it was consciously decided that it should. Bradbury's dandelion seeds imply a resignation to the idea that if man can go to the stars, great—if not, well, you can't win'em all.

Bradbury's sympathies are clearly with the dying Martians, so the darker aspects of **The Chronicles** color his treatment. Matheson, on the other hand, exhibits an enthusiasm for the often violent lives of *all* of the characters. Everybody is trying to go somewhere, be someone, find something, as they did in the book.

The biggest difference between the two screenplays comes during the last third of the TV treatment, which is totally devoted to the stories of the survivors of Earth's folly. Bradbury gave almost no space to this aspect of the project, which calls for a sympathetic view of the isolated Earthlings and their attempts to make peace with themselves. Matheson manages to portray them as characters with a sense of purpose, reinforcing the resolve to continue living, trying, no matter what.

Exactly why Bradbury chose to view **The Chronicles** from an essentially Martian point of view is an interesting question, perhaps forgotten in time or simply arising out of a creative desire not to cover the same ground twice. If his version of the film had been realized it would certainly have made an interesting science-fiction think-piece, and few could have argued with his right to make whatever changes he felt necessary.

On the other hand, Matheson has brought viewers **The Martian Chronicles** that readers have known for nearly 30 years. We are living in an era in which the very concept of space travel is an everyday reality, and holds little hope or mystery outside of the occasional UFO-story. This very familiarity with space allows the inherent, positive message of **The Martian Chronicles** to surface untarnished by sci-fi derogation. Matheson has capitalized on this fact, and faithfully structured his treatment on the basic declarations of universal truths of the original.

The result is a brand-new re-presentation of a literary masterpiece, translated into modern film terms by a gifted student, guided by his mentor's original notes and studies. Two talented writers have arrived at the same destination by circuitously different routes, and will share the spotlight when **The Martian Chronicles** unfold in the fall of 1979. Only then will they, and legions of science-fiction fans around the world, find out if Mars is indeed Heaven.●

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THE FLYING SPY is the definitive record of pulp air ace G-8, mad enemy scientists and their evil creations. **The Flying Spy** chronicles all of G-8's 110 fantastic adventures in a massive 160-page casefile that pinpoints *every* fact and facet of his fabulous career—even a chart illustrating every gunshot wound and injury the airborne espionage agent sustained in his struggles with the Kaiser, G-8 and his flying comrades, Nippy Weston and Bull Martin, are analyzed and their exploits cataloged, carefully detailing their many cases behind enemy lines.—all for $5.50 plus postage.

THE AVENGER

PULP is a collector's fanzine devoted to the study and enjoyment of the 30s pulp era, featuring its authors, artists and publishers. The issues offered here also feature reprints of the rare and highly collectable Avenger novelettes, written for **Clues Detective Magazine** in 1942-43. **PULP 8** contains the novelette, *Death to the Avenger*, along with a study of **The Masked Detective Magazine**, a **See Stories** index, and a gallery of magnificent covers from **Jungle Stories**. **PULP 9** features *Coffin for the Avenger*, and an in-depth illustrated analysis of the Secret Agent X series. **PULP 10** continues with a 15,000 word presentation of *Vengeance on the Avenger*; interviews with pulp personalities; and a revealing article on G-X, the Phantom Fed. All three issues of **PULP** are 36-pages in length, available now for $2.00 plus postage each.

WU-FANG

THE MYSTERIOUS WU-FANG is a complete reprint of the Oriental fiend's premier appearance, *The Case of the Six Coffins*. Written by **G-8** author Robert J. Hogan, Wu-Fang is a Fu-Manchu style supervillain, whose demonic plots roar along with breakneck speed and fury. This is the first of Wu-Fang's eight highly collectable, impossible to find stories, and is available in a 100-page volume with magnificent illustrations by noted Fu-Manchu artist John Richard Flanagan, $5.50 plus postage.

DR. YEN SIN

DR. YEN-SIN brings the yellow peril back for another stab at America's jugular vein in *The Mystery of the Dragon's Shadow*. This Fu-Manchu imitator, who lasted a brief three issues, set his sights on conquering the west, with ancient Devil's-lore and a horde of Asian Hell-born, and was opposed only by the wits and fists of Michael Traile—The Man Who Never Slept. Another 100-page reproduction for $5.50 plus postage.

DR. SATAN

DR. SATAN collects five rare thrillers from the pages of **Weird Tales**. Summoning up the forces of black magic, hypnosis, drugs and arcane mysticism, Dr. Satan was one of the first, and possibly best, pulp villain. This Dr. Satan volume offers an excursion into the sinister and the bizarre in a 100-page edition for $5.50 plus postage.

THE OCTOPUS

THE OCTOPUS was by far the most outrageous villain of the pulps. Striking through corrupt medical officials, he holds Manhattan for ransom, and is opposed only by the white-haired Medico of Mercy, Dr. Skull. Written by Norvell Page, author of **The Spider** series, The Octopus appeared for only one very rare issue in 1939, and is reprinted in this 100-page volume for $5.50 plus postage.

THE SCORPION

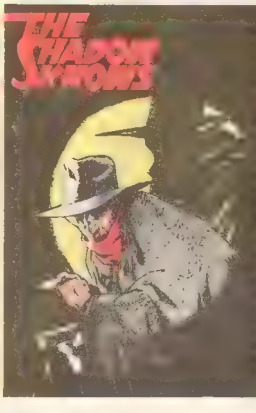
THE SCORPION is the direct descendent of **The Octopus**, only the name has been changed. This is another Norvell Page concoction of the bizarre and the grotesque, pitting Dr. Skull against hordes of crazed sanitation workers who kill their families, then throw themselves into the city incinerators. **The Scorpion** is one of the strangest and hardest to find pulps ever, and this volume reproduces the entire (and only) novel, *Satan's Incubator*, for $5.50 plus postage.

SPECIAL!! Order *all five* of these rare villian-pulp reprints *for the price of four!* Just send $22 plus $1 postage and handling, and you will receive **Wu-Fang, Dr. Yen-Sin, Dr. Satan, The Octopus** and **The Scorpion**—a savings of over $5.50 off the regular price—*like getting one book free!* This offer applies only to the books specified in the villain-pulp category, and will only be available while our supply lasts.

DOC SAVAGE WANTS YOU

to be part of his world of action and adventure by becoming a member of the **DOC SAVAGE BROTHERHOOD OF BRONZE** Now, commemorating over 40 years as a relentless champion of justice, the dynamic Man of Bronze is organizing around the globe. His purpose is simple: he wants YOU to become a member of his elite team of adventurers, to be part of the fun and the future of this exciting, new movement. ● **The BROTHERHOOD OF BRONZE is the only authorized organization dedicated to Doc Savage—and as such comes with an OFFICIAL MEMBERSHIP PORTFOLIO created exclusively for this purpose.** ● As a member of the alliance, you'll receive a beautiful, bronze finished **IDENTIFICATION CARD** inscribed with the original Doc Savage Pledge and the Man of Bronze symbol. The card will also carry **YOUR OWN INDIVIDUAL CODE NUMBER**, assigned by Doc and recorded in his secret files for future reference. EARLIEST ENTRIES WILL GET THE LOWEST NUMBERS! ● A special **BROTHERHOOD OF BRONZE BADGE** featuring a portrait of Doc Savage is also included (and guaranteed to become a rare, sought-after collector's item in the years ahead). ● Members will be kept up-to-date on Doc's latest happenings in fiction and on film, and find a wealth of vintage data from the 30's in a **SPECIAL BULLETIN** which accompanies the portfolio. ● LIMITED OFFER a **COMPREHENSIVE INDEX** will chronologically list the pulp exploits of Doc Savage including the title and date of their original appearance WHILE THEY LAST! ! ● The entire package comes in a specially illustrated envelope you'll want to save. None of these items will be available in stores or from other sources. REMEMBER: all members are entitled to attend exclusive club activities such as exhibits, lectures, displays and meetings simply by showing their ID cards ● Don't miss out! join the **BROTHERHOOD OF BRONZE** today! Send $2.00 plus .80 postage and handling—you'll never be SUPERAMALGAMATED again!

THE SHADOW KNOWS



that thousands of readers have been clamoring to learn more about this fantastic adventurer—and he's doing something about it!! The Shadow is rallying all those who've thrilled to his exploits over the years to reveal a top priority organization called **THE SHADOW SECRET SOCIETY**. For the first time in over 25 years, the Master of Darkness is opening the rolls so that YOU can become a trusted agent in his cause of justice and honor. As an **agent, a special MEMBERSHIP KIT is waiting for you NOW!** ● The **SHADOW SECRET SOCIETY** is exclusively for those who have followed his crusade and kept pace with his assault against the forces of injustice. As a member of the **SHADOW SECRET SOCIETY**, you'll become a licensed agent in The Shadow's network of operators. As proof, you'll carry a unique midnight-black **IDENTIFICATION CARD** bearing The Shadow's likeness on one side—and **YOUR OWN EXCLUSIVE INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATION NUMBER ON THE OTHER!** ● In addition, a **SECRET SOCIETY BADGE** to be worn for purposes of identification is included with every membership kit (this is the equivalent of the original club's Shadow Pin—try to find one today!). ● **A SPECIAL BULLETIN** packed with art and articles also comes with the kit, and features a look at everything from the pulp and radio adventures of yesterday to the books and films available today. ● BONUS—WHILE THEY LAST, a complete **MASTER CHECKLIST** of the Shadow's pulp novels will accompany each kit. ● The entire membership kit comes in a **SPECIALLY ILLUSTRATED ENVELOPE**. REMEMBER, all members are entitled to attend exclusive club activities such as exhibits, lectures, displays and meetings simply by showing their official ID CARDS. ● Membership kits WILL NOT be available in stores or shops anywhere. Become a member of the **SHADOW SECRET SOCIETY** today! Send $2.00 plus .50 postage and handling—and Burbank will mail your membership kit out immediately! !

MediaScene

BUCK ROGERS
THE PRODUCTION ART OF WILLIAM STOUT

William Stout is perhaps the best-known and most talented cartoonist *not* working in the comics of the 70s. Although his knowledge of films, pulps and four-color magazines is prodigious, he has chosen to direct his talents to the more personal and rewarding world of undergrounds, posters, record jackets and commercial advertising. The artwork featured on these pages showcases yet another aspect of Stout's creativity—production design for TV and feature films.

The drawings and concept designs on these pages produced by Stout for **Buck Rogers of the 25th Century**, currently in general release. Done for an early version of the movie, they were created last year when **Buck Rogers** was still being planned as a series of three TV shows, each two-hours in length.

Stout obviously cast his Buck from a mold other than the producers eventually settled upon, but the differences evolved during the final scripting stage, which came after these designs were submitted. The baroque aspect embodied in these large, detailed illustrations was abandoned by producers Glen Larson and Leslie Stevens, who perhaps felt that today's audience would be more likely to accept the look of **Battlestar: Galactica** than vintage Buck Rogers. As a result, only Stout's Earth symbol shoulder emblem design eventually found its way into the finished production. The rest, and best, of Stout's work is published here for the first time.

The choice of Stout for this assignment was particularly appropriate, because he is perhaps the last thriving commercial artist who still exhibits an overt influence from the singularly high-quality EC Comics of the 50s. There are traces of Williamson, Frazetta and Wood woven into his style, with light touches of humor by way of an affinity for Disney-like fuzzy (and scaly) animals. This synthesis of techniques and an obvious reverence for perfection has earned him respect from comic fans and pros alike, and has proven successful in his advertising work. For example, he created a limited release movie poster for the X-rated **Flesh Gordon** that capably paid homage to the serials starring Buster Crabbe. One Frazetta-ish Rainier beer ad he produced has become quite famous and is widely sought after by collectors.

The second cover of this issue of **MEDIASCENE** is an illustration by Stout conceived as a showcase for the film's atmospheric action. Buck is shown on a staircase, cornered by mutants, in Anardria—the devastated area outside a domed city that was once known as Chicago. Note that his costume bears a close resemblance to the uniform Frazetta used for the covers of **Famous Funnies**, when that comic's lead feature was also *Buck Rogers*.

The opening double-page spread is an unusually colorful costume and character portrait of the free Earth Forces—the good guys. The helmets, belts, tunics, boots and weapons are all subtly

CONAN! TARZAN! JOHN CARTER! ON FULL-COLOR POSTERS BY FRAZETTA!

ALL FRAZETTA POSTERS ARE $3.75 EACH-USE THE CONVENIENT ORDER FORM ON PAGE 35

different, indicating the variances between branches and ranks within the army.

"I originally envisioned **Buck Rogers** as an old-fashioned 30s-40s style action-packed adventure," Bill explains. "In the illustrations of these costumes (based on turn-of-the-century military uniforms), I chose character types well-known to the followers of films starring Errol Flynn and Ronald Coleman. The inspiration for the big fellow's high-tech, artificial arm was based on Lionel Atwill's role in **Son of Frankenstein.** The little monkey-like creature in the turban is obviously an insider's poke at **Gunga Din,** and even the streamlined spaceship overhead is part of that era."

The space pirate costume is shown with a variety of accoutrements and five different helmet designs, including your everyday basic combat headgear (based on a Syracosaurus skull). The gallery of emblems, insignias and shoulder patched are also symbolically evocative, ranging from the laurel-wreathed Earth insignia (printed in pure gold), to the twisting, serpentine Draconian emblem, and the multiple-horned, skull-emblazoned emblems of the Space Pirates

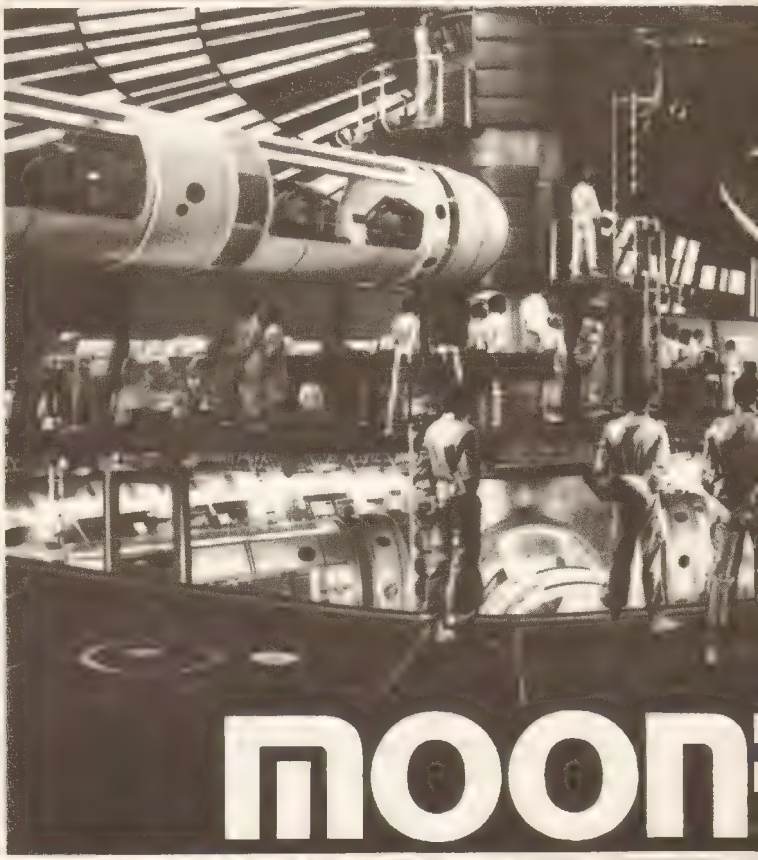
The double-page layout of weapons is a virtuoso display of large and small field ordinance that has a functional yet fanciful aura about it. The exotic-looking pirate rifle is actually a Japanese Nambu Type 11 light machine gun of WW 2 vintage. Similarly, many of the other weapons appear to be based on practical howitzer and recoilless rifle concepts with imaginative latitude taken in terms of back-pack portability, exotic external embellishments and ball-joint mountings.

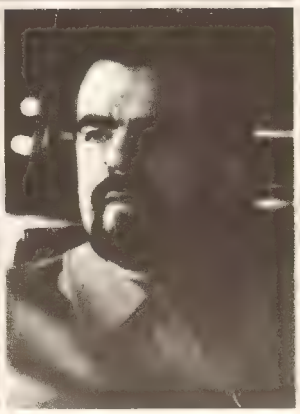
"One of the weapons I was asked to design was a high-tech short sword," Stout relates. "This seemed to me to be a bit like asking for an electric fork, but after some thought and inspiration from the movie **Texas Chainsaw Massacre,** I came up with the perfect solution. One of the show's producers, Leslie Stevens, reported suffering several nightmares, caused by his exposure to my drawing of the Chainsaw Short Sword."

Altogether, Stout's assembly of exotic designs display a remarkable view of Buck Rogers and his world. Apparently, the movies aren't ready for dinosaur-skull helmets and chainsaw short swords just yet. But there's no need to give up hope. We all know that the last star warrior hasn't even begun to fight yet.●

-WEAPONS-
Artillery Gun
"Mole" sensor Spy
Pirate Trident
"Hedgehog"
Pirate Claw Glove Gun
Draconian Tower Gun
Flying Cannon
Torpedo Sled

≈WEAPONS≈
Quiver





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RAKER

LAUNCHING THE NEW JAMES BOND THRILLER!

5...4...3...2...

The countdown's already begun on the newest James Bond Adventure—and if the previous ten films didn't prove it, **Moonraker** will show that wherever Her Majesty's top secret agent chooses to go, the sky is definitely *not* the limit.

Based loosely on the third novel by Ian Fleming, **Moonraker** is another high-action travelogue extravaganza set in Paris, Venice, Brazil, a lost Mayan city and outer space. The newest array of super-spectacular gadgetry includes a trick Venetian gondola and a copy of the NASA space shuttle.

Producer Albert R. Broccoli has decided to promote his latest Bond movie in a manner consistent with the current fantastic film trends. "The premise of **Moonraker** is not science fiction, it's science fact," according to Broccoli, and a major advertising campaign is being mounted on his quote. To support this lofty goal, two NASA space veterans, Eric Burgess and Harry Lang, were recruited to simulate a sophisticated rocket control room based upon the original located at the NASA Space Center in Houston, Texas.

Bond's villainous counterpart in **Moonraker** is the bearded Hugo Drax, a gentleman of manners and breeding with a luxurious chateau in France full of tapestries and priceless paintings. Drax is, among other things, trying to re-create a master-race of "beautiful people" and is perpetually surrounded by lovely aides. French actor Michael Lonsdale portrays the suave, menacing Drax, and is perhaps best known for his role as the relentless detective from **Day of the Jackal**.

Joining Bond in his latest super-spy adventure is Holly Goodhead, a CIA heroine, and the latest in a long line of luscious leading ladies. Holly is played by Texas-born Lois Chiles, an ex-model, who has appeared in **The Way We Were**, **Coma**, and most recently as the murdered chewing-gum heiress in **Death on the Nile**.

There are at least nine other major *femme fatales* in **Moonraker**, including Corinne Clery, the masochistic beauty from **The Story of O**. They provide the usual sensuous background characteristic of the Bond films ever since Ursula Andress first stepped out of the surf in **Dr. No**.

The rest of the major cast, and most of the crew, are seasoned veterans of the James Bond series. Roger Moore has successfully carried the 007 license to kill through three previous films, giving the role a dapper, casual flair. Any early comparisons with Sean Connery's earlier portrayal of the character have long since been vindicated—the last Moore film, **The Spy Who Loved Me**, doubled the box-office gross of any previous Bond thriller.

Richard Kiel, who appeared as "Jaws" last year, returns for the indefatigable touch of comic relief that has become a highly commercial aspect of the series. Sheriff Buford T. Justice does *not* appear to be destined for a comeback, however.

Bernard Lee, Lois Maxwell and Desmond Llewelyn also return as "M," Miss Moneypenny and "Q," respectively. They have been constant fixtures throughout the series, and are apparently approaching retirement with only these occasional breaks for work every other year.

Broccoli has been the behind-the-scenes force guiding the James Bond adventures along their 17-year run. Under his control, each film has become bigger and more expensive to produce, resulting in escalating profits time after time.

Director Lewis Gilbert returns to the series for the third time, following his efforts on **You Only Live Twice** and **The Spy Who Loved Me**. John Barry is also being reunited with Bond as the composer and conductor of the **Moonraker** musical score, his ninth time at the podium for Her Majesty's Secret Service.

Screenwriter Christopher Wood previously collaborated on **The Spy Who Loved Me** script, but makes a solo effort on **Moonraker**. He has fashioned what amounts to an entirely new story, using the original book's title and villain as a springboard, all in the interest of more extravagant production on the screen.

Particular emphasis is being given to Production Designer Ken Adam's eye-catching chromium and stainless-steel sets, which have always endowed Bond foes with an epic, scientific, futuristic, larger than life quality. With only one directive from **Moonraker**'s producer: "Make 'em even better than last time," Adam has constructed everything from a hieroglyphic-adorned cavern full of ancient sculptures and artifacts to a mansion filled with sunken pools and gleaming metallic bridges, from a psuedo-NASA Space Center to an actual space shuttle launching pad. The final scenes required a striking set-piece, with 007 in mortal combat aboard an orbiting enemy station in outer space, which the Oscar-winning designer provided, with a futuristic eye on the latest technological innovations, and the aid of nearly 100 special effects experts.

From jungles to chateaus to lost cities to deep space, **Moonraker** takes Bond up, up and away in the most lavish production to date. Undoubtedly the most popular (over one billion tickets sold) and successful fantasy series ever created, the James Bond saga will apparently continue even beyond the point where book and story titles are no longer available.

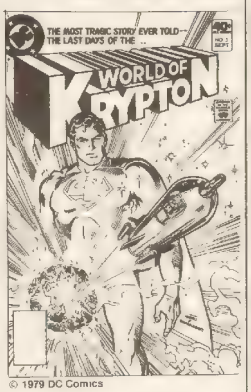
This summer, **Moonraker** will the join the ranks of the big bucks b.o. bonanzas. Then millions of fans around the world will see the latest in deadly mechanical wizardry, learn if Holly Goodhead is more than just a provocative name, and find out just who is the cinema superman of 1979. ●

COMIXSCENE

On July 19, DC will formally re-enter the science-fiction/fantasy comic field with the debut of their latest dollar-size book, **Time Warp.**

Actually, **Time Warp** is a year-old idea, based upon a 25 year-old format, being produced by DC's current top line of artists and writers. "The actual groundwork for the book was laid several months before last year's 'implosion' as part of our big expansion plans," Jack Harris explains.

"Our initial intention was for a revival of **Strange Adventures**, presenting science-fiction in a true anthology format. We had decided to go with the dollar format so that readers would get a lot of diversity for their money,



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and were admittedly strongly influenced by the old EC Comics.

"Then the crash came, and everything was frozen in suspended animation. Recent upswings in sales and the success of **Superman** have made expansion somewhat more viable again, however, and the new respectability of science-fiction was a positive factor.

SF OK'd by DC's VIPs

"In a recent discussion, the project surfaced, and Joe Orlando expressed an interest in giving it a try. We decided to do the book as a mixture of **Strange Adventures** and **Weird Science**, with some of the stories having twist endings, but on a less pretentious and intellectual level—more fun with less brain strain.

"The title **Strange Adventures** seemed a little out of date though, so we kicked it around for a while until **Time Warp** came up. It's a generally vague catch-all phrase that has a good science-fictiony sound and feel to it.

"Joe Orlando will personally edit the first few books, and I'll act as his associate editor until we get it off the ground. We're trying to turn this into one of DC's two or three real prestige books, so that artists and writers will *want* to work for it—the way they want to do **Batman** and **Jonah Hex**. The anthology format allows us to pick and choose talent without having to worry about series' commitments. In fact, we don't want any series in the book at all—if something really catches on, we'll shoehorn it into another title, and we have no plans for any appearance by Adam Strange for the time being, even though two stories do exist and are looking for a home.

"When Mike Kaluta heard about this project he asked if he could become the series' permanent cover artist. He's already turned in the first issue's art, and we'll continue to feed him the assignment as long as he can meet the deadlines.

"As part of the incentive for creators to work on this book we're asking people to submit ideas, and featuring their names prominently on the covers. In addition, most of the artists are inking their own work, and all of the material is being tailored specifically for the project, not just pulled out of the inventory.

"Mike Barr, Denny O'Neil, Bob Rozakis, George Kashdan, Mike Fleisher, Joe DeMatteis and I have all written stories for the first issue. Tom Sutton, Rich Buckler, Don Newton, Dick Giordano, Jerry Grandenetti,

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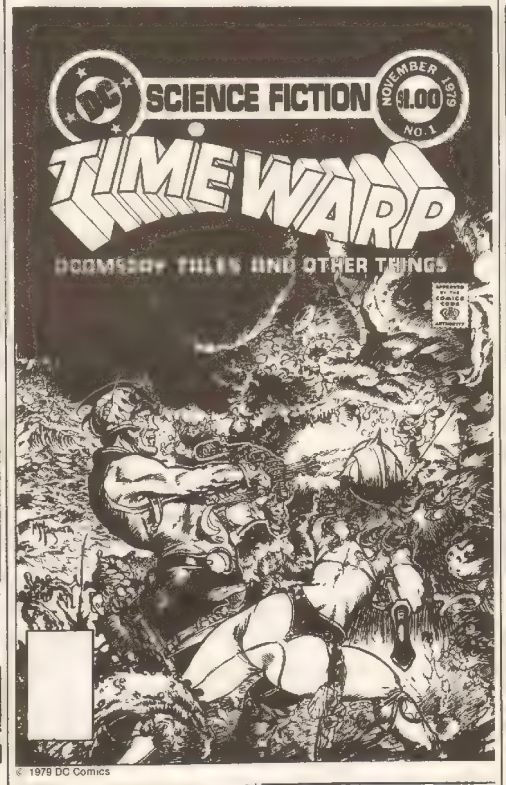
Steve Ditko and even Gil Kane have provided the art. We've also got Jim Aparo and Mike Nasser lined up for future issues, and even Orlando will take up his pencil again."

In addition to the **Time Warp** project, DC is also negotiating to take over the production of children's and coloring books featuring their characters. The purpose of this is to increase the in-house revenues generated by producing these products instead of licensing them to Western Publishing, and to generally improve the artwork used to exploit their marketing potential—most comic fans are thoroughly ashamed of the overly cartoony aspects of most coloring books featuring their favorite characters.

DC's infamous underground **Cancelled Comics Cavalcade** is rapidly becoming a redundancy in semantics, if not an easy to find collectors' item. Much of the material printed in this self-effacing publication is gradually finding its way into print—but is it the first printing or the second printing, technically? Will artists and writers receive reprint royalties?

Other items of noteworthy interest include DC's institution of discount subscription rates, selling 12 comics for the price of 10—less than a year after their cataclysmic cutbacks.

Issue 17 of **DC Comics Presents** will tie-up some of the threads left loose by the abrupt



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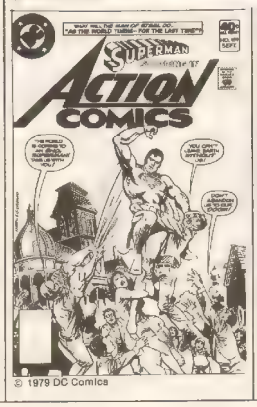

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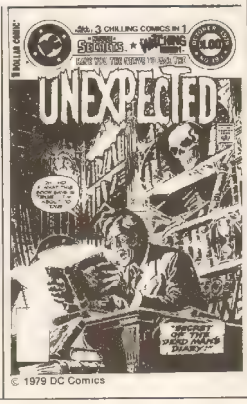

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cancellation of **Firestorm**, as The Man of Steel meets the Nuclear Man.

To quote the latest DC press release: **"Wonder Woman** is headed for new directions in her magazine (this is news???)"

Don Heck will stick around to pencil at least one more issue of **Green Lantern**, and Gil Kane has done the cover for issue 123.

And in mid-summer, **Jonah Hex** will enjoy a charming gunslinging Christmas, shared by his long lost father, drawn by Dan Spiegel. (Whatever happened to the DC Comicmobile and Superman Land in Metropolis, Illinois?)

At Marvel, preliminary negotiations are underway to launch a new monthly comic based on a

news/views/reviews from the world of comics

line of toys being contemplated by Parker Bros., the world famous games-makers. If Parker's decides to take the merchandising plunge (accompanied by tons of TV publicity), Marvel hopes to be in on the ground floor.

Epic Illustrated has pretty much settled upon an early October distribution date, and the first issue's line-up is being gathered and finalized, pivoting around major contributions by Stan, John Buscema, Craig Russell, Jim Starlin, Rich Corben and the Hildebrandt Brothers.

Jim Shooter is concentrating on stablizing the existing Marvel universe, re-establishing all the major characters within their well-known frames of reference. "We may have gone off the deep-end back when **Star Wars** hit so successfully. **Man From Atlantis** and **The Human Fly**, in retrospect, just didn't fit the Marvel style, and consequently didnt last long. Thank God **Captain Sticky** never got off the ground."

Part of this Marvel re-orientation project is a program designed to help artists and writers create Marvel comics faster, and thus earn more money. Shooter and John Buscema have held at least one informal conference to date, after hours in the offices, with any interested creators willing to help share the tricks of the trade among those who need that little bit of help to make their comics more exciting.

"As most people know, I originally wrote comics for DC, then quit altogether for about five years," Shooter explains. "I didn't even look at a comic during this 'retirement' period, until I decided to re-enter the field.

"I had learned a lot of things about story structure and comic writing from Mort Weisinger's era, but I didn't know how these concepts fit in with today's product. So, when I decided to come back, I looked at the DC line-up and found it about the same as I had left it. Then I looked at Marvel and saw stuff like Man-Wolf and Killraven and Deathlok, and just knew I couldn't write *anything* like that—they just didn't make sense to me.

"At DC, I eventually ran into some problems, and wound up at Marvel, where I saw that my idea of real comic writing was still valid, but sort of unravelling slowly through misuse. I don't pretend to hold the secret of comic writing, but I know that stories *must* have a beginning, middle and end. And even the most complicated storyline can be competently handled with *clarity*—and clarity is essential to a reader's comprehension of any story. That's really all I'm after: stories that make sense; plotting that has dramatic structure—anybody can throw in all the tricks they want, but all the pieces must fit in the end.

"Just by way of example, Roy Thomas recently sent me a long, detailed plan for the next twelve issues of **Thor**. Not only is *every* issue carefully thought out and self-contained with characterization, pacing and plot twists, but they combine to create a massive epic tying-up many loose plot-threads left over from Kirby's **Eternals**. I love Roy's ideas, and admire the way he plans to make them fit together, and he has certainly proved himself above criticism as a satisfying, commercial writer. If everyone wrote like Roy I could do less editing and more writing myself.

"John Buscema volunteered his services for our in-house convention because he sees the need for explanations of certain tricks of the trade—not so much how to draw, but *what* to draw, and *when*. The need for storytellers is great in comics, and John is probably the most fluent artist around, as well as the most technically skilled."

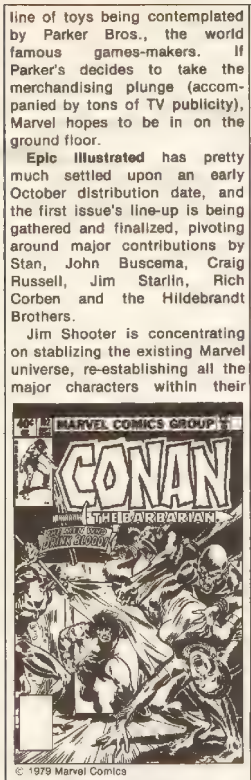
Besides providing this little impromptu **How To Draw Comics the Marvel Way** extension course, Buscema is preparing to begin work on the **Superman vs. Spider-Man** tabloid, as soon as the final contracts are signed. Dr. Doom and the Parasite have definitely been cast as the villains of the piece, but the Hulk and Wonder Woman team of the second book in the package deal may be changed—Stan is looking for a DC hero with a stronger, more defined character than that of the ever-changing amazon.

Stan is also having second thoughts about letting Pocket Books release a novel in their comic series based on the Sliver Surfer. He would like to remain the Surfer's sole writer, even though William Rotsler has already turned in a completed manuscript. A memo concerning the Surfer novel was apparently sent to Stan months ago, but never brought to his attention.

Surfer's pb novel approach sans Stan

Steve Ditko is turning in a powerhouse performance for Marvel now that he has returned to the fold, having completely pencilled and inked the first three issues of the revived **Machine Man**, and provided a 34-page fill-in story for Marv Wolfman's **Dracula** black & white magazine. The **Dracula** tale was designed with Steve in mind, and concerns a Dimensional Man, whose body is being slowly absorbed into another astral plane as a result of a black rites ceremony.

Gene Colan, meanwhile, is



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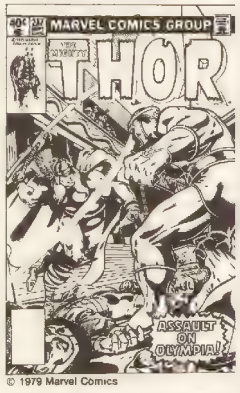

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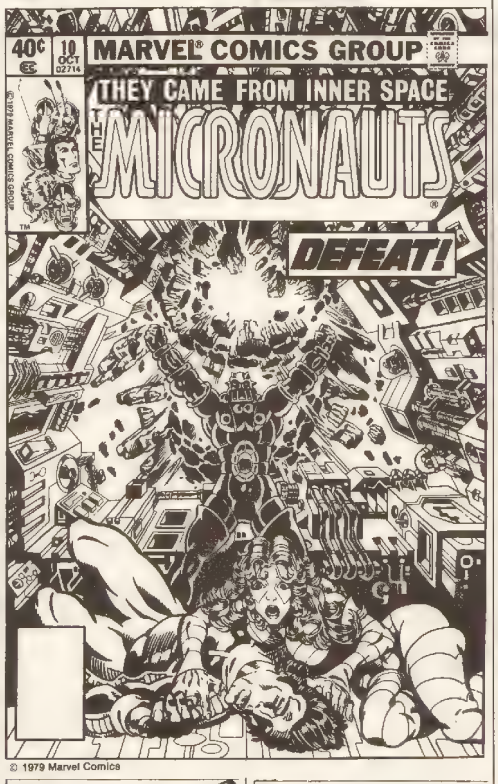

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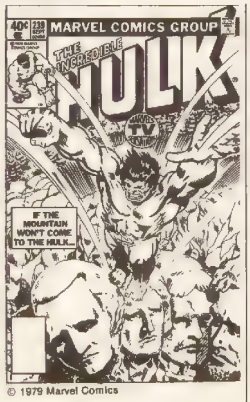

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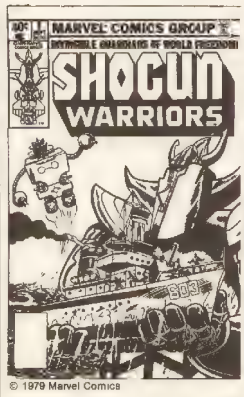

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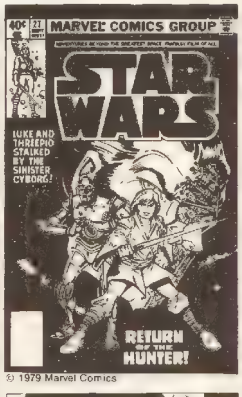

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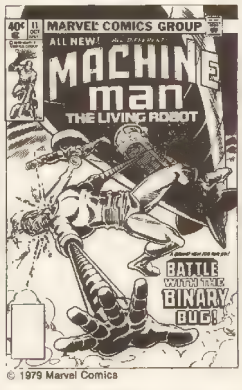

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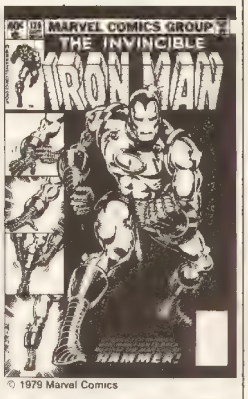

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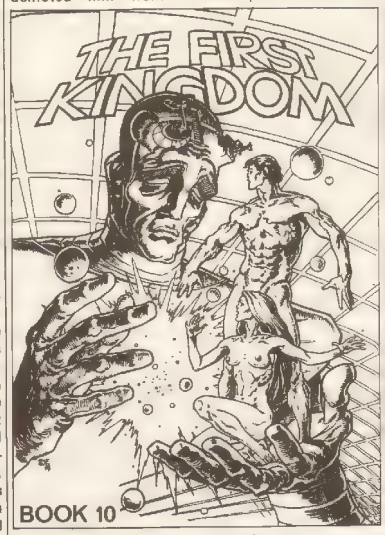
COMIXSCENE

working on his second **Dracula** story with Tom Palmer, utilizing a character who appeared in four panels of the color comic **Tomb of Dracula** 17 (talk about obscure), and Wolfman admits that the plotline is a little stronger than anything he could have ever done under the Comics Code, but still within the bounds of good taste.

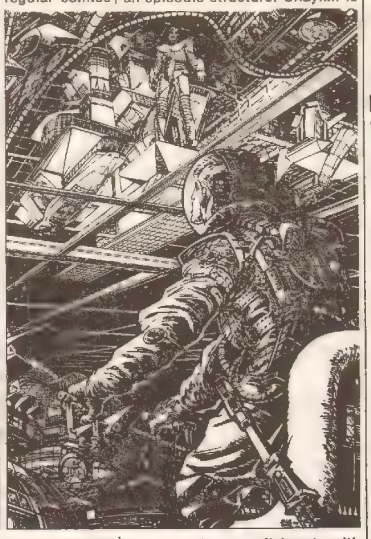
This year's **Spider-Man Annual** will be a bit different than most, but vaguely familiar in execution to many older fans. The actual story by Wolfman, John Byrne and Terry Austin is only 24-pages long, and the rest of the book will contain 9-pages of features on Spidey's most popular villains. There will also be blueprints and schematic breakdowns of prominent Spider-Man geographic locations such as: Peter Parker's apartment; The Daily Bugle offices; Aunt May's house, etc. These are being included so that new fans can acquaint themselves with the characters' surroundings without having to read twenty books, and will provide ready future reference for new artists on the strip. Such pin-ups and featurettes were done by Ditko and Kirby in the earliest **Spider-Man** and **Fantastic Four Annuals**, and were always nice little "extra" attractions, showcasing gimmicks and details the stories never had time to stop and explain.

Alice Cooper will make his Marvel Comics debut in **Marvel Premiere** 50, in a tale illustrated by Tom Sutton and Terry Austin. Apparently Cooper's abandonment of his snake act has demoted him from full-color magazine to regular comic book commercial status.



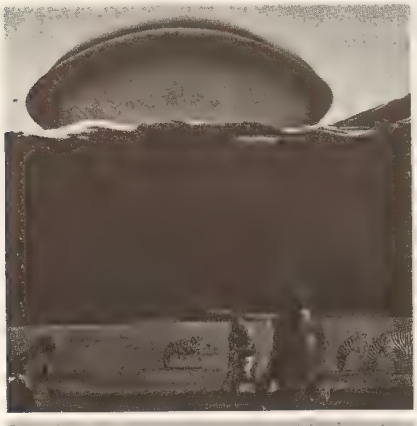
And just to kill some extra time, as well as make a few extra bucks, Craig Russell has inked an issue of **Tarzan**, pencilled by Sal Buscema. This is a one-shot appearance by Craig, who will be concentrating his main energies on the fantasy opera series idea he has sold to **Epic Illustrated**.

Outside of the regular comics field, Howard Chaykin is still concentrating on wrapping-up the last of **The Stars My Destination**, and already has a number of future projects in the planning stages. Based on the recent tale of *Gideon Faust* in **Heavy Metal**, Chaykin and Len Wein are contemplating an entire book of Faust tales which would cumulatively form a novel with an episodic structure. Chaykin is also planning to collaborate with noted S-F writer Michael Moorcock on a book titled **Swords of Heaven, Flowers of Hell**, to be published in the fall by the **Heavy Metal** organization. Some of the pencilling has been begun, but the majority of the labor is being delayed until the **Stars** commitment has been met.



Finally, as an example of comics' growing influence on the publishing medium, an illustrated edition of Ray Bradbury's **Martian Chronicles** will be issued to coincide with the TV-film's broadcast this fall. *All* of the stories are printed in this oversized, 6x9" volume, with artwork by Ian Miller, who produced a similar package for the Michael Crichton novel, **Eaters of the Dead**. Published by Bantam Books, **The Illustrated Martian Chronicles** is really a rather delayed package—all the artwork has been in inventory for several years. The recent trends towards heavy sci-fi, illustrated novels and innovative paperback formats have cued Bantam to release this famous classic in this newly packaged edition, at the relatively reasonable price of $5.95.●

Release set for new illustrated Bradbury



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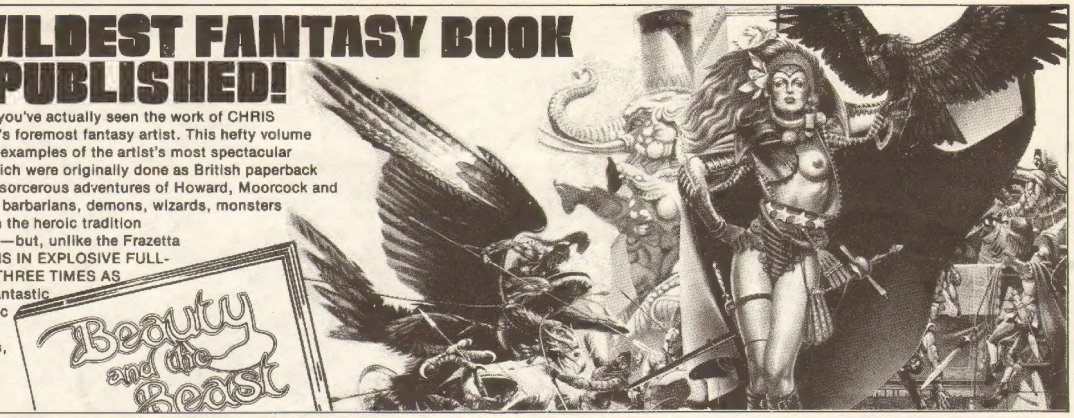

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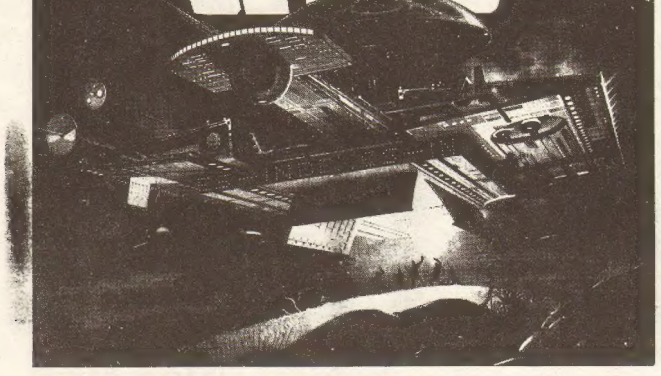

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○D	○R	○2L	○3I
○E	○S	○2M	○3J
○F	○T	○2N	○3K
○G	○U	○2O	○3L
○H	○V	○2Q	○3M
○I	○2A	○2S	○3N
○J	○2B	○2V	○3O
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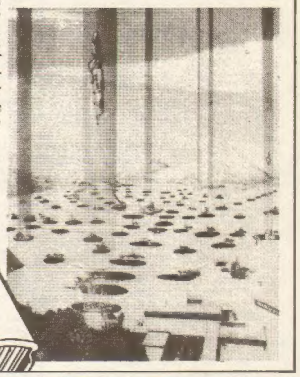

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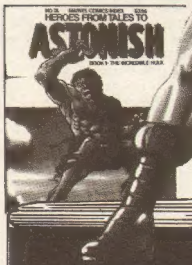

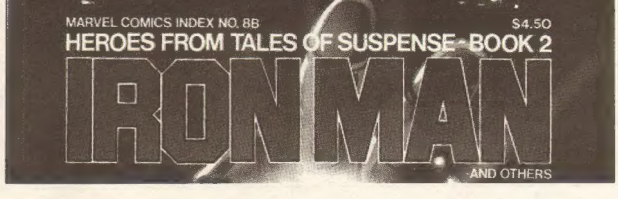

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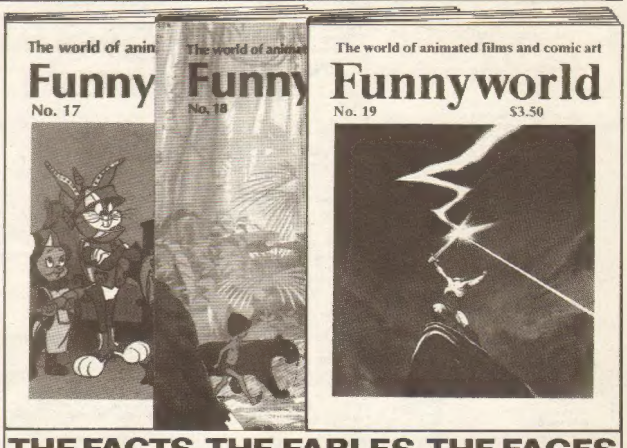

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